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THE ADVENTURES
OF
DON SYLVIO
DE ROSALVA

BY

C. M. WIELAND

With an Introduction by

ERNEST A. BAKER, M.A.



LONDON:
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS, LIMITED
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & Co.
1904

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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Introduction

WIELAND belongs to that inferior order of genius that brings no creative energy, no epoch-making ideas to bear upon human life and thought, but receives the impress of the age, reflects its movements and revolutions, and reacts upon them with the force and insight of an acute and subtle mind, richly stored with the learning of the past. Such a mind finds its appropriate task in criticism and interpretation. Wieland's life coincided with the epoch of fermenting opinions and revolutionary cataclysms that preceded the birth of the nineteenth century, and his life and works may be regarded as, in a measure, an epitome of the intellectual history of his time.

The life of Christoph Martin Wieland divides itself into three periods, more or less clearly marked out by the stages of his mental conflict between the rigid pietism in which he was nurtured and his instinctive tendency towards freedom of thought and enjoyment of nature. The impulses of youth were almost wholly eliminated by his father's training and the discipline of a peculiarly monastic school: under their influence he tried sincerely but unsuccessfully to make himself a saint. His earliest writings were mainly the offspring of Christian or theosophical enthusiasm; Plato was not austere enough for his Puritanism, without a strong infusion of Stoic severity; and he went out of his way to make an onslaught on the brotherhood of Anacreontic poets, Gleim, Götz, and Uz. The second period, among the first-fruits of which was the present work, was distinguished by a violent revolt against these repressive influences. In it he wrote much that is frivolous and licentious, if not

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positive [redacted] [illegible] saw more [illegible] he entered upon [illegible] and [illegible] the middle [illegible] unruly [illegible] of mind, and the supremacy of the spiritual element in man's nature freely acknowledged. Such works of varied excellence as the *Iphigenia* in its final form, his *Germ the Natural*, the pregnant satire of *The Liberties*, the matchless *Hermann*, and its latest romance of Hellenic life, *Amintas*, were the products of that period.

Born in [illegible] at Biberach, a free corporation town of Swabia, he was the son of a Lutheran minister, a learned man, who undertook the entire charge of his education, and with parental zeal pushed him on so fast that at seven he was able to read Nepos with enjoyment, and at thirteen made pocket companions of Virgil and Horace. This unwise stimulation of the mental faculties had the usual effect of giving him a distaste for the healthy recreations of boyhood: he grew shy, and fond of solitary musing, unfit for competition with his equals, and inclined by his father's religious discipline to morbid habits of self-analysis, and, it may be added, of self-deception. His frequent tears of contrition, his outbursts of religiosity, were not insincere: they were the transient emotions of an impressionable soul, and by no means implied any deep and lasting conviction.

His father's perseverance was rewarded by making him a prodigy of learning: his turn for writing and imitation was not less precocious. From the age of eleven he was passionately fond of poetry, and used to rise at daybreak to compose little operas and cantatas, not being allowed to write verses during the day. Among the juvenilia which he is supposed to have burned later on was an epic on the destruction of Jerusalem, written at this period. At fourteen, his father sent him to the high school of Klosterberg, near Magdeberg, a college equally renowned for the excellence of its classical teaching and for its semi-monastic system of instruction, an evangelical monasticism that made it a stronghold of

the pietism then dominant among German Protestants. The austere life, the spiritual exercises, and the habits of meditation, penitence, and devotion had a powerful effect on Wieland. He applied himself with ardour to the sentimental side of religion, though he had no inclination for dogmatic theology. Yet, at the same time, his constant reading in Greek and Latin poets and philosophers was deepening the inner tendencies of his mind, and preparing silently for the epoch of emancipation. Already he had become acquainted with the pangs of doubt as a consequence of dipping into Bayle's Dictionary and Voltaire; but he expiated his curiosity with tears of repentance, and when he left school his piety and orthodoxy seemed to be as great a credit to the religious instruction of home and college, as his classical attainments were to his intellectual training.

The elder Wieland had destined his son for the ministry, but now had, reluctantly, to agree, on account of his weak lungs, that he should follow the law. In 1750 the young man returned to Biberach for a short stay before taking up his studies at Tübingen university, a visit that was fraught with importance as the era of his first love affair. The lady was the accomplished Sophia von Gutermann, known under her later name of De la Roche as the author of some novels. She was two or three years his senior, and already engaged, but seems to have regarded the brilliant young enthusiast with feelings of real affection, while his love for her was none the less passionate for being of a reverential and idolatrous kind. She was the muse who inspired his first serious poem. His father had been preaching one Sunday on the text, "God is Love," and as he walked in the fields with Sophia, Wieland began to pour out in rhapsodical language the feelings and visions with which such a theme filled his imagination. He spoke of the destiny of men and spirits, of the dignity of the human soul, and of eternity. "Never in my life," he said afterwards to Bodmer, "had I been so eloquent." The lady suggested that he should commit his thoughts to writing, and Wieland, as soon as he took pen in hand,

began the composition of his "Nature of Things," a metaphysical poem that was to some extent an imitation of Lucretius, and analogous in method, though different in style, to Pope's *Essay on Man*.

At Tübingen, he devoted little attention to law, but continued by his wide, if not profound, reading in many literatures to amass the great store of learning that gives so rich and varied a colouring to all his works. In 1752 appeared his first volume of poems, containing the "Nature of Things," the "Anti-Ovid," and his "Moral Epistles," the last-named being the earliest example of that Socratic irony which was to be an important ingredient of his more mature productions. The book was dedicated to Sophia. An epic in the style of Ossian, on Hermann, or Ariminius, the ancient hero of the Fatherland, which he began at Tübingen, was the occasion of another salient incident in his career. He sent the first portion in manuscript to the critic and autocrat of letters, Bodmer, who was living at Zürich with a coterie of literary men, and conducting a Swiss review. Bodmer's response was to invite the young genius to Zürich, and to install him in the apartment Klopstock had vacated a year ago. Here Wieland found himself in a congenial world. Living in a delightful country house, which seemed to him the proper scene for the talks and meditations of Plato and his disciples, with such literary friends about him as Gessner, Böttiger, and Kleist, and in intimate companionship with Bodmer, whose character and opinions he revered, he had a stronger incentive than ever to devote himself to authorship. His visionary tendencies were strengthened by their conversation and his sedulous study of Plato, and by the peculiar tenets held by the circle. From Bodmer also, who availed himself of his services as a contributor to the journal, he derived the practice of borrowing from foreign writers, ancient and modern, which he was to turn to such good account throughout his career that he virtually legitimised its morality. Wieland's mind was naturally eclectic; his aptitude for assimilating ideas from all sources amounted to a gift. Whatever he borrowed he enriched with new implications and an

interpretation adapted to the age. To what was old and impotent he gave, so to speak, a new life. This is sufficient justification for his seeming plagiarisms. The idea of his *Letters from the Dead to the Living* (1753), was the result of reading Mrs Rowe's *Friendship in Death.* He imitated Bodmer's mannerisms in his *Trial of Abraham* (1755), after having written a too friendly panegyric on the master's scriptural poem, "Noah." The Platonic *Contemplations on Mankind*, the *Vision of a World of Innocent Men*, the *Sympathies*, *Timoclea*, and the *Vision of Myrza*, were all more or less imitative.

All these works were saturated with the mystical teaching and the intolerant puritanism of Bodmer and his sect. His metaphysical opinions were of a nebulous and extravagant kind, unadapted to life and conduct, and his practical views narrow and bigoted, identifying religion with all that is gloomy and repressive. It was at this time that he wrote his attack on the lascivious tendencies of the Anacreontic poets, a rebuke that he stultified by his own loose writings at a later period.

He pities Petrarch for speaking of his Laura with an idolatry to which no human excellence can be entitled from man; he laments that the sublime genius of Pindar had been squandered on the decoration of a heathen and profane mythology; and he adds that whoever did not consider indifference to religion as an honour was bound in duty infinitely to prefer the feeblest spiritual hymns of the ecclesiastical poets to the seductive imagery of the finest odes of Uz or Gleim.

Xenophon gave him a subject, and the great Frederick of Prussia a hero, for his epical poem, "Cyrus," begun at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, the fortunes of which he watched with anxiety. But readers took little interest in this glorification of their monarch as a compendium of public and private virtue, and the poem remains a fragment.

The religious inspiration was not destined to last very long, and from the enthusiasm of the visionary and the stern denunciation of sensual joys and mundane beauty, he was soon to pass to the opposite extreme. Wieland had left Bodmer's house in 1754, finding the restraints and the master's love of interference irksome. Bodmer

had been bitterly disappointed in Klopstock, in whom he had anticipated something ethereal, a kind of seraph, and had found a beer-drinking and pipe-smoking gallant, fresh from student life in Leipzig, with no aversion from the sentiments or the morals of Gleim and his associates. Wieland was to cause him a still more painful disillusionment. The revolution that was about to take place in the young man's philosophy showed that his convictions had been without depth, and his religious fervour but the offspring of an ecstatic imagination. A letter he wrote to Zimmerman, the author of *Solitude*, in 1758 is an indication of the coming change.

> I am not quite so much of a Platonist as you think me; I begin to be a little more familiar with the inhabitants of this lower world. . . . My morality is not that of the Capuchins. I no longer confound wisdom with austerity, nor admire those authors who paint the virtues which they recommend to us as so ugly and disgusting. I think with you that the wise man cultivates all his senses, internal and external; exercises all his faculties, and enjoys all nature.

Soon he went much further, and from the gloomy and morose idealism he had cultivated under Bodmer he rushed headlong into the frank hedonism, the doubt and the frivolity of his middle period.

From Zürich he went to Berne, to become tutor in the house of a M. Sinner, partly drawn thither by the presence of a company of actors who had performed his translation of Rowe's *Lady Jane Grey*. This had been produced with very slight alteration as his own work, and now he composed a tragic drama on an episode from *Sir Charles Grandison*, and yet another on the beautiful story of Araspes and Panthea in the *Cyropædia*. The last-named, which foreshadowed many of the ideas of *Agathon*, was afterwards published separately, and forms the earliest dramatic romance in German literature.

In 1760 he was suddenly recalled to Biberach by the news that the corporation had spontaneously appointed him town clerk, with a moderate stipend, which he hoped would put him in a situation of independence. Moral independence and a greater measure of self-reliance he did acquire as a result of absence from those

who had hitherto exerted too potent sway over his plastic, impressionable mind, always so delicately responsive to external stimulus. But the duties of the office proved more engrossing than he had anticipated, and the lack of agreeable society was painful. In a letter to Gessner, he compares Biberach with San Marino, describing the tediousness and triviality of his legal occupations, and the uncongenial people among whom his lot was cast. His only relief from the daily round was in the hours he devoted to the Muses. Among the employments of his leisure during the years 1762–6 was a translation of Shakespeare, which was afterwards completed and corrected by Eschenburg.

But he was not left long to this Bœotian solitude. In 1763, Count Stadion, a fine old courtier and man of the world, cultivated, and fond of literature, retired from a long career of diplomacy to the family mansion of Warthausen, some three miles from Biberach, bringing with him his former secretary, La Roche, the husband of Sophia. Through her friendship, Wieland was welcomed by the Count, and soon became a constant guest at Warthausen, where La Roche and his family, with their patron and his visitors, formed a circle of friends and amiable critics, who incited him to new work, and, by introducing him to a more luxurious and more tolerant society, contributed with other causes to hasten on the process of emancipation. In the Count's well-stocked library Wieland had access to the works of all the eminent modern writers. Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury, Rousseau, Montesquieu and Voltaire, and other exponents of the moral and metaphysical scepticism of the time, helped to shatter the fabric of belief that was already shaken. The journal of this period of gradual transformation was faithfully kept by Wieland, though under many disguises. *Agathon* (1766–7) is in reality his own story; Hippias is Count Stadion; and the Epicurean arguments by which the hero is converted from the austere religion of his youth are, in a manner, Wieland's own apologia.

The touching picture drawn by Euripides of the childhood of Ion suggested the story of Agathon's early years.

Educated like the Attic hero among the hallowed groves and shrines of Delphi, Agathon has been initiated into the transcendental visions of the Orphic theosophy, and is imbued with the lofty idealism of Plato. His virtue is tried by collision with the world and its temptations, and his philosophy by the sophisms of Hippias. Though he succumbs for a while to these united assaults, yet he frees himself again from the trammels of sensuality, and enters upon a career of action, proceeding at the end to summarise the results of his experience, and to find a means of harmonising the rival claims of virtue and pleasure. In his first draft of the story, Wieland hardly succeeded in determining the problem in a way to satisfy serious thinkers; but years later he gave the story a more conclusive ending, and one more in unison with a philosophy that admits man's intuitive demand for goodness and right. At the present stage, his thought has not got beyond a utilitarian conception of morality, and even that was wanting in breadth.

It was at this time, 1764, that he composed the story of *Don Sylvio de Rosalva*. Wieland was in the habit of reading his manuscript poems to the Warthausen ladies, including such risky stories as that of *Diana and Endymion*, and others of the *Komische Erzählungen*, in which he had cast off the fetters of pietism and Bodmer, and followed in the lascivious footsteps of Voltaire and Crébillon *fils*. Such light and flippant tales were exactly to the taste of the German aristocracy, dominated as they were by French influences; but at the same time it gave them a new interest in the literature of their own language. The Attic world depicted by Aristophanes and his favourite, Xenophon, the satirical stories of Lucian, French and Oriental fairy tales, and the chivalric romances, supplied him with a multitude of subjects for prose and verse during this period. With an imagination that easily bore the weight of his vast and miscellaneous equipment of learning, he revived the life of ancient Greece and the Middle Ages, and added thereto the delicate charm of his ironical allusion to the present.

Musarion is the most illustrious of a series of metrical tales whose scenes are laid in classic Greece. Phanias,

an Athenian voluptuary, having lost his wealth, retires like Timon to the sea-shore, and persuades himself that he is a Stoic, and has learned to despise the pleasures he can no longer enjoy. His friends Cleanthes and Theophron are similar representatives of the Cynic and the Platonic philosophies. They are pursued in their retreat by Musarion, a rich and beautiful hetaira, who, by her demonstration of the more potent charms of Epicureanism, puts their convictions to a test they are unable to withstand. The dramatic vivacity, and the half-sportive, half-serious irony of Wieland appear at their best in this admirable dialogue. In the same year, 1768, was written the fairy tale of *Idris and Zenide*, in which he took Ariosto as his model: only five cantos were finished. Sensual attractions are here again shown in conflict with those of mind and spirit. Idris, who in the moral implied by the allegory stands for Platonic love, in order to win the hand of Zenide, queen of the four races of genii, is subjected to the ordeal of withstanding the temptations of the most beautiful females in each of the four tribes beneath her sovereignty. He successfully resists the enchantments of the nymphs of Water and of Fire, but the narrative of his trials was not carried any further.

In 1765 Wieland had married. His wife was the daughter of a merchant of Augsberg, a plain, affectionate, domesticated woman, with no accomplishments, who was unable to appreciate her husband's writings, but looked up to him with a species of blind worship. In Schiller's letters she is said to have been "as ugly as night, but worth her weight in gold, and gay and naïve almost to simplicity." The licence of Wieland's opinions did not extend to his conduct. He was an excellent husband and father, and found true happiness in his home life. In a little summer-house, quite close to the town, yet completely in the country, he spent his leisure hours "in company with the muses, fauns, and grass-nymphs" that floated before his fancy, "fair as those which break in upon the meditations of holy hermits in the wilderness."

So nine years rolled away at Biberach, and then, in 1769, Wieland received an invitation from the Elector

of Mayence, probably on the recommendation of Count Stadion, who was anxious to remove him from Biberach after an affair in which Wieland's independence had made him obnoxious to the Court of Vienna, to become Professor of Law at the University of Erfurt. The university was in a decadent condition, with few students, and professors out of employ. Wieland entered upon his duties with energy, attracted attention by his course of lectures "On the State of Nature and Society," and drew so many hearers that the number of students at the university was quickly doubled. Sundry dissertations on political and social philosophy, delivered during his three years at Erfurt, were afterwards embodied in his collected works; and the same line of thought is pursued in his prose romance of *Koxkox and Kikequetzel, or the Mexican Paradise Lost*, which ridicules, somewhat after the manner of *Candide*, the anti-matrimonial and anti-social theories enunciated by Rousseau. *The Travels of the Priest Abulfanaris into the Interior of Africa* is a satire on the missionary work of the time, and the worthless apostles who were being sent out for the nominal purpose of converting and civilising the heathen. More seriously argumentative diatribes upon the paradoxes of Rousseau were his essays "On the Original Condition of Man," "On the Attempts to Discover the True State of Nature," "On the Perpetual Amelioration of Human Society," and the like. His defence of his erotic poetry, "Cupid Accused," and the exceedingly clever and cynical "Combabus," one of the finest of his *Comic Tales*, were among the poetical compositions of the period.

An Oriental novel in the style of Crébillon, *The Golden Mirror, or the Kings of Scheshian* (1772), also deals in a Utopian manner with schemes of social reform, and was suggested by the revolutionary innovations of the Emperor Joseph II., who is praised under the name of Tifan, the ideal sultan. Its object was to apply the lessons that the best and noblest of every nation may derive from history; in other words, it inculcates the theory of an enlightened despotism as the ideal state. With enchanting eloquence, Wieland discourses on the

eudæmonistic principles he has adopted, propounding his philosophy of happiness with a persuasiveness and a nobility of thought far removed from the daring and aggressive mockery of preceding works. Yet the book is not without its comic chapters, in which a fantastic humour like that of *Tristram Shandy* relieves the gravity of the moral discussions. *Diogenes of Sinope* is another study of a historical personage in which the whimsical humour of Sterne has been adapted to a satirical purpose like that of Voltaire's romances. The cynic philosopher is portrayed as a sharp and humorous critic of mundane follies, and, as in the Quixotic romances, artistic effect is given to the view that perhaps it is the world that is mad, and not the philosopher.

Wieland did not find much to please him among the "new-fangled, dainty, philosophical, and literary *petit-maîtres* with which the school of Baumgarten, Meyer, and Klotz had filled Saxony." Erfurt was a field of strife between the old professors and those recently appointed by the Elector, into which Wieland was reluctantly drawn. He was assailed virulently in the pulpit for his scepticism and the hedonistic trend of his philosophy, which was supposed to be an index to the character of his private life. At the same time, the actual licentiousness that prevailed in the most fashionable circles in Erfurt was far from agreeable to him, and he preferred to stay at home with his wife and his two daughters rather than go much into society. The young La Roche, Sophia's son, was now his pupil and an inmate of his house.

It was, accordingly, a grateful release when he received an invitation from the reigning Duchess of Weimar, Anna Amalia, to become tutor to her children, the young duke, Karl August, and his brother, Constantin. He moved to Weimar in 1772, and was presented with the honorary title of Aulic Counsellor. Now at length he found himself in a congenial home, in an honourable and lucrative position, with ample leisure for his literary avocations; ere long he was to be the centre of a brilliant gathering of the finest intellects of modern Germany. In 1773 he began the publication of his periodical miscellany,



the *Teutscher Merkur*, a magazine resembling the Parisian *Mercure de France*, edited and partly written by himself, and containing all sorts of original contributions, literary notices, criticism, and discussions of the higher topics of polite conversation. In it, from this time forward, appeared the first draft of most of his works, an admirable method of giving them in their more permanent form the advantage of careful and deliberate revision. The *Mercury* had no small share in the reputation Weimar eventually attained in the intellectual world, and, directly or indirectly, it helped to bring together the galaxy of eminent writers that made the city famous as the German Athens. Bertuch, Reinhold, and Schiller successively acted as Wieland's coadjutors; then he was assisted by Böttiger, who took over the editorship in 1795. At the same time, he did not escape the ills to which editors must inevitably expose themselves. One party attacked him for his supposed lack of patriotism, and another, headed by Herder and Goethe, for the narrowness of his æsthetic views. A captious review of *Götz von Berlichingen*, which happened not to be from Wieland's pen, provoked Goethe to write his farce, *Gods, Heroes, and Wieland*. Instead of fomenting a quarrel, the persiflage was received with perfect good humour by Wieland, and when, in response to the Duke's invitation, Goethe came to Weimar, the two poets met each other in a cordial manner, and with Herder, who shortly followed them, formed a literary alliance unparalleled in Europe. The first number of the *Mercury* for 1776 was headed by a poem of Goethe's. Schiller also became a member of the circle, and in his letters to Korner gives an amusing account of Wieland's attempts to capture him as a son-in-law. His opinion of the older writer was somewhat unfavourable. He feared that Wieland's sensitive and vacillating mind was not able to act upon fixed principles. Korner seems to have instilled these suspicions, for he asks whether Wieland is anything more than a clever juggler, or a highly finished man of the world. It must be admitted that Wieland's frequent changes, and the veil of irony in which he wraps his personal opinions, are some justification for these doubts.

Among the earliest productions of the Weimar period were the metrical tales modelled on the *Fabliaux* of the Trouvères—charming examples of Wieland's genius for borrowing the literary forms, the plots, and the costumes of a forgotten style, and adapting them to the tastes of his own day. The theme of *The King of the Black Isles* was taken from the *Arabian Nights*; *The Summer's Tale*, from *Chrestien de Troyes*; the *Pentameron*, the *Lays de l'Oiselet*, the *Contes of le Grand*, and other Oriental tales and romances of chivalry supplied him with similar material for stories in verse. Some are satirical, some didactic, others, again, preserve the simple garb of the old ballad poetry. The versatility of style, and the humour are most pleasing; and there are few offences against good taste. A gradual and permanent change is evident from the sceptical and ironical philosophy of former years to a deeper and purer feeling, a belief in the existence of goodness, and a vindication of the triumph of spiritual over corporeal beauty. In *Peregrinus Proteus*, a Lucianic novel that has twice been translated into English, it is said: "If the spirit be not ever soaring upward, the animal part will soon stagnate in the mire of the earth, and the man who does not strive to become a god will find himself in the end degraded to a beast." That novel and the *Agathodæmon* are notable exemplars of his acute psychological analysis. Peregrinus was a Cynic philosopher whose portrait Lucian drew as that of a hypocritical sensualist. Wieland retells the story in such a way as to give a more kindly interpretation to the incidents supposed to be narrated to Lucian by an eye-witness. In the *Agathodæmon* he treats the story of Apollonius of Tyana in an equally ingenious manner, and attempts to furnish a plausible explanation of the reported marvels.

In 1774, in the pages of the *Mercury*, Wieland brought out his satirical romance, *Die Abderiten*, finely translated into English by Henry Christmas (1861) under the title, *The Republic of Fools*. The story seems to have been the outcome of an unpleasant affair that had occurred years ago at Biberach, whilst Wieland was the town clerk. A minister named Brechter, whom he had

helped to obtain some preferment in the town, gave offence to the orthodox party, and had to be reinstated in his pulpit by the mayor and his officers in person, assisted by Wieland in his official capacity. An attempt was made by the enemies of Brechter to deprive Wieland of his appointment, but the lawsuit ended in his favour. Under fictitious names, and with an ingenious disguise of the actual incidents, the affair was now parodied in *Die Abderiten*, with much personal ridicule of the members of the corporation of Biberach. But the satire has far wider scope than this. According to Wieland, though the city of Abdera has disappeared from the face of the earth, its people are not extinct, but, like the Jews, "they live still, undestroyed and immortal and, although scattered among the nations, they remain to the present day pure, unmixed, and faithful to their original Abderitish fashions and manners. . . . Notwithstanding that they speak everywhere the language of the country in which they live, acknowledge in common the constitutions, religion, and customs of the non-Abderites, eat and drink, walk and act, dress and adorn themselves, curl and perfume their hair, purge and physic themselves; and, in short, perform everything that is necessary in human life—just like others, they, I say, notwithstanding this, remain like to themselves only, in all that constitutes them Abderites, just as if from remotest time they had been separated from the sensible beings of our planet by a diamond wall, thrice as high and thick as the walls of Babylon." "There is no town in Germany . . . where 'the Abderites' have not met with readers; and, wherever it has been read, the descriptions it contains have been received as portraits, of which everybody has seen the originals in a thousand places where," says the author, "I had never been, and where I had not the slightest acquaintance."

At the epoch chosen by Wieland for his representation of this metropolis of dulness, the philosopher Democritus is a citizen of Abdera, and the town is about to receive the honour of a visit by Euripides. One cannot give even an outline here of the farcical events that lead up

to the Abderitish *cause célèbre*, the lawsuit about the ass's shadow, of the humorous comments of the laughing philosopher, who is, however, represented in a somewhat different character from the traditional, or of the story how Euripides was a spectator, incognito, of the Abderitish performance of his own play, *The Andromeda*. As a specimen of Wieland's irony, nevertheless, I may as well quote the history of the lawsuit as to the estate of Pamplius. This property was intrinsically of little value, but it commanded a beautiful view. Unfortunately, a neighbour thought fit to build a barn in such a position as to cut off four-fifths of the prospect, making the property, in the opinion of Pamplius, less desirable to the value of eighty talents.

The subject was referred to law. Pamplius certainly could not prove that the prospect was an essential and indispensable part of his estate, or that his neighbour's barn shut out air and light from him, or that his grandfather, from whom the property came in a direct line to him, had given a single drachma more, on account of the prospect, than the land was worth in the time of Pamplius himself; neither could he assert that his neighbour was under any kind of engagement to him in virtue of which he was bound to pull down the barn at his desire.

Only his advocate contended that the real question at issue lay much deeper, and arose out of the original idea of all property. "If the air were not a transparent medium, Elysium and Olympus itself might be opposite my client's estate, and he would be able to enjoy the sight of them as little as though a high wall were built right up to the sky against his window. This transparent nature and peculiarity of the atmosphere is the first and true cause of that lovely prospect which renders my client's property so desirable. Now this free and transparent air is, as everybody knows, one of those common things which are equally the property of all, and every unoccupied portion of it must be regarded as a *res nullius*, a thing which belongs to nobody, and, therefore, which becomes the property of him who first takes possession of it. From time immemorial the ancestors of my client have together with their estate possessed and enjoyed the prospect which is now in dispute, unhindered and uncontested by any man They have, therefore, with their eyes, occupied the thereunto-belonging portion of air, and through this occupation the aforesaid portion has become an essential part of the hereinbefore-mentioned estate, and no part of this, however small, can be taken away without bringing into danger of destruction every principle of law and rectitude."

The senate of Abdera found this reasoning very powerful. The litigation went on with great subtlety on both sides, and, as Pamplius himself was during the course of it elected into the senate, the cause became daily more and more intricate, and the arguments on his side all the more considerable. At last the farmer died without seeing any

end of his lawsuit, and his heirs, perceiving that simple agriculturists like them could do little or nothing against so great a man as a senator of Abdera, allowed their advocate to bring the matter to a compromise, by which it was agreed that they should pay the costs of the action, and abstain from completing the proposed barn, the rather as they had no money left to finish it, and the lawsuit had so eaten up their estate that there was no longer any necessity for a barn upon it at all.

Although this romance is somewhat too elaborate in its plan, and, like *Don Sylvio de Rosalva*, too academical in style, it must rank high among those universal satires which are a permanent rebuke to the weaknesses and the follies of mankind. It has the same bearing upon the England of our own day that it had upon Wieland's Germany.

The final edition of *Agathon* is a convincing proof of the permanent alteration in his moral attitude. In the earlier version, Agathon was left in a state of moral uncertainty by the arguments of the sophist, Hippias. The sequel tells how, in the household of the venerable sage, Archytas, who realises the ideal of his lifelong quest, he learns once more to put his trust in wisdom and purity. The train of thought implied in this changed conclusion is that all men in their hearts admit the reality of virtue, even though their acts seem to deny it. In man there are two natures, a merely animal element impelling him towards the things of earth, and a free, intelligent, and spiritual element, striving to uplift him, even beyond the limits of the knowable universe. These antagonistic natures must be reconciled, and the senses subjected to the control of the diviner self ere man can fulfil his proper destiny.

Wieland's great epic of romance, *Oberon*, is permeated by these loftier views of morality. *Oberon* is the story of Huon of Bordeaux, told originally in a *chanson de geste* in the thirteenth century, and translated into noble English by Lord Berners. It is a strangely composite story. To the ordinary tale of Charlemagne and his peers, with its deeds of arms and its courtly broils, are added the more diversified interests of Arthurian romance and the Oriental magic that came into vogue in the Middle Ages. The dwarf Oberon is of Teutonic origin,

though placed in Oriental surroundings, so there was some propriety in making him the titular hero in a German poem. By shifting the centre of interest from earth to the realm of Oberon, Wieland adapts the fantastic and preposterous incidents, that pleased the Middle Ages as the proper adventures of knight-errantry in the Orient, to the course of a modern epic of fairyland. In his poem, glamour and beauty take the place of mere marvel and absurdity. Yet it is noticeable that he adheres most religiously to the details and the chronological order of the traditional story. His plastic skill is mainly shown on the ethical side of the narrative, that is to say, in making the issues depend upon motives, and so welding the multifarious and antagonistic elements of the romance into a beautiful harmony.

The legend tells how Huon, son of the Duke of Bordeaux, slays, unwittingly and guiltlessly, Prince Charlot, the dissipated son of Charlemagne, and escapes death at the hands of that fierce monarch only on the condition that he undertake an impossible commission, namely, to journey to Bagdad, beard the caliph, carry off his daughter, and four of his grinders as a trophy. On his way to carry out this desperate venture, Huon falls in with the king of the fairies, the dwarf Oberon, who supplies him with the means of accomplishing it. But in his subsequent adventures on the vogage home with the caliph's beautiful daughter, Huon forgets the injunctions of the elfin monarch that he should preserve his chastity. Vengeance swift and terrible falls on the disobedient knight and his lady. With admirable skill, Wieland makes the interposition of Oberon dramatically probable by tracing it to the consequences of his quarrel with Titania. Then he had sworn a great oath that one thing alone should heal their feud, the preservation of faith and constancy by two mortals under the stress of superhuman trials and misfortunes. Thus the absurdity of Huon's enterprise, which nothing less than a miracle could enable him to achieve, is rendered natural as a stage in the affairs of the immortals; the rôle played by Oberon in the Medieval history is no longer capricious and inexplicable; and on the human

side, the seemingly mad and aimless series of adventures finds an adequate motive in the moral ordeal and purification of the hero.

But there is no heavy seriousness in Wieland's retelling of the story. His humour plays about it, reconciling farce and tragedy, revelling, like Shakespeare in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in the enchanting juxtaposition of the natural and the supernatural worlds. The comic effects that ensue when Oberon's miraculous horn is winded, are a congenial opportunity for Wieland's elfish merriment.

> He to his rosy lip the horn applies,
> And breathes enchanting tones of fairy sound:
> At once old Sherasmin in giddy round
> Reels without stop—away the spinner flies,
> Seizes a hoary nun without a tooth,
> Who dies to dance, as if the blood of youth
> Boil'd in her veins: the old man deftly springs,
> Bounds like a buck, while every caper flings
> Her veil and gown in air, that all laugh loud forsooth.
>
> Cloyster and convent burn with equal rage,
> Nor hoary hairs nor rank, the dance withstand;
> Each sinner takes a sister by the hand,
> And in the gay contention all engage.
> Not soon such ballets shall be seen again:
> No rules or discipline the choir restrain—
> No tipsy faun so bounds in wanton dance;
> Huon unmoved beholds the reeling trance,
> While laughter shakes his breast to see the giddy train.

Wieland had the good fortune to secure a sympathetic and poetical translator in William Sotheby, whose version of *Oberon* ranks as one of the finest translations in the English language. Sotheby's verse maintains an equable level of smooth, harmonious numbers, from which it is difficult to select examples of outstanding excellence. Let two more passages chosen at random give a taste of his style. The first is Oberon's answer to the sprite who begs the fairy king to have pity on the persecuted hero.

> "Blind to futurity earth's children stray,"
> The king replies. "Ourselves, each fate and sprite,
> Are slaves, thou know'st, to fate's resistless might!—
> In holy gloom high o'er us winds his way.

All go, where'er his secret influence draws:
Willing or not, all own that ruling cause.
And, in the depth of this abyss unknown
That parts me from the knight, one hope alone,
One hope alone is left by fate's eternal laws."

The other extract is a brief specimen of Wieland's suggestive powers of description, which, when it has full scope, achieves many entrancing pictures of scenes in the East, and landscapes from the unknown land of faery.

'Mid the wide circuit of the stormy deep
This lonely tow'ring island strikes her sight,
Pil'd up with monstrous ruins height on height.
The gloomy clouds that round the desert sweep
Lure her to steer amid the wild unknown
Her hovering flight—grief marked it for her own.
Downward she rushes in this dreary grave,
To mourn her being, and beneath the cave
Become, ah! would to Heaven! herself a senseless stone.

And since Titania to these mountains fled,
Far from all joy, sev'n times by her unseen
Gay spring had cloth'd the earth in cheerful green—
As on an altar lies her stone-propt head,
Expecting death—The seasons flourish fair:
Days rise and set—deep shade, and sunny glare,
Chequer the rocks, in vain, with magic gleams—
Tho' joy should o'er her pour a thousand streams,
Her soul in lonely gloom would brood o'er dead despair.

She loathes the cliffs and dark o'ershadowing height,
Where, prey of willing grief, she lonely lay—
Lo! at her wish, as sink the rocks away,
A new Elysium opens on her sight.
Lonely no more—three lovely sylphs appear
Swift at her call, rejoic'd her voice to hear:
Three sister sylphs, rejoiced to bring relief,
Gaily they come to dissipate her grief,
And love, not duty, hastes to check the gushing tear.

The paradise, which here the elfine queen
Form'd for herself, was, sure, the lonely place
That hid Alphonso in its lov'd embrace:
Unknown to him, the sheltering cliffs between
Stood the lov'd grotto, her sequester'd throne:
Whence, from the grove, by whispering night-winds blown,
Soft notes seraphic flow'd, and oft by night
O'er him at rest, she pois'd her viewless flight,
And breath'd upon his cheek pure airs to earth unknown.

Between 1790 and 1795 the *Mercury* teemed with articles and imaginative essays originating in the events of the French Revolution. Wieland, unfortunately, became obnoxious to both parties in Germany, since, like several other wise and eminent men, he welcomed the Revolution at first with frank eloquence as the dawn of a glorious epoch, and then, when he was disillusioned by the subsequent anarchy, he denounced the revolutionary spirit that was now gaining ground even in Germany. The *Dialogues of the Gods*, under a Hellenic disguise, agitate many of these questions. Wieland had the sagacity to foretell in 1798, in one of his *Dialogues between Four Eyes*, that the anarchy of France would find its cure in military despotism, pointing out Bonaparte as the prospective dictator. When the event proved his foresight, he was accused by the anti-Jacobins of collusion with the revolutionary party in France. He gave up the editorship in 1795 to his faithful lieutenant, Böttiger. Much obliquy was thrown upon him about this date by the teachers of the new æsthetic, foremost among them the Schlegel brothers, for his adherence to an effete critical system, and more particularly for his alleged plagiarisms. That Wieland had sought his models, and often his ideas, from other writers could not be gainsaid, but the manner of his borrowing was sufficient defence. The last years of his literary career were embittered by these malicious attacks, all the more unfair as they were directed against an aged man who had always sought the love of his fellows, and, as he said to Gleim, had never lost the esteem of a wise and good man who had learned to know him.

In 1797, Wieland, now sixty-four years old, made a short tour in Switzerland, and revisited the scenes of his youth. On returning to Weimar he felt more keenly the attractions of a country life, and was induced to venture on the purchase of a villa at Osmanstadt, on the Ilm, a few miles from Weimar, whither he removed with his children and grandchildren, a numerous family, and settled down in almost patriarchal retirement. He was honoured by the continuous regard of the Duke of

Weimar and the Dowager Duchess Amalia, who often visited his new home; he was also annoyed occasionally by the foreigners who made pretexts to call upon a man of his European reputation. Sophia de la Roche paid him a visit in 1799, and has left an Arcadian picture of Wieland in his country house, surrounded by two generations of his children, honoured by his peers, on intimate terms with Goethe and Herder, and still busy at times with his pen. He was composing his last important work, *Arisippus and his Contemporaries*, a historical study of the later offspring of Socratic thought, the Platonic, Cynic, and Cyrenaic systems. In developing the Epicureanism of Aristippus and his personal character, Wieland once again shows inimitable skill and delicacy in filling in the vague outline of the existing records. Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, and Aristophanes are finely portrayed, and the philosophers enunciate their own doctrines in person, with such a freshness and enthusiasm, as if the author were imparting his own original thoughts. The famous hetaira Lais is magnificently drawn, an exquisite embodiment of the beauty, wit, and paganism of the Greek world that Wieland worshipped.

But friends and relatives were dying around him, and in 1801, after thirty-five years of happy wedded life, he lost his wife.

"Since the death of my dear wife," he writes to Böttiger two years later, "I have lost all pleasure in life, and the glow which things had for me before is gone for ever. I endeavour to occupy my attention, and to deaden the sense of my loss, which I feel most keenly when I lie down at night or when I awake. Never have I loved anything so much as I did her. When I knew that she was near me in the room, or if she came into my room at times, and spoke a friendly word or two, and went away—it was enough. Since she is gone, I say to myself, no labour will prosper with me more. Perhaps I could not have supposed that with her weak frame she would have been spared to me for thirty-five years, to scatter flowers upon my path of life with her unpretending fidelity and duty. But then I think of Philemon in the fable. Why could we not have died the same day?"

His sorrows were aggravated by pecuniary troubles. Osmanstadt had been bought on the instalment plan,

and, the political convulsions of the time having rendered literary incomes precarious, the purchase money could not be paid off. Wieland was obliged to sell the property at a loss and return to Weimar. The Duke gave him a house opening into the gardens of the Dowager Duchess, and henceforth he was counted as a member of the household, with a State box at the theatre. He had the reputation of being fond of living in the society of great people, and to this is attributed his weakness for elegant furniture. With the Dowager Duchess he was a great favourite, and Schiller says he regarded her with special affection because she used to let him go to sleep on the sofa by her side. The story goes that he was so lacking in reverence on one occasion as to throw a book at her head. After Jena, Wieland's dwelling was saved from pillage or destruction by the express orders of Napoleon. In 1808, at the time of the Congress of Erfurt, the Emperor came to Weimar. Wieland was present in the theatre, where a company of French actors gave Voltaire's *Death of Cæsar*; and Napoleon caught sight of the venerable old man with the black skull-cap. Being told that it was the famous Wieland, whom he had already expressed a desire to see, the Emperor sent for him, and after the play they had a long conversation in the ball-room. The account shall be given in Wieland's own words.

"I had not been there many minutes before Napoleon came across the room towards us: the Duchess then presented me in form, and he addressed me affably with some words of compliment, looking me steadily in the face. Few persons have appeared to me to see through a man so quickly at a glance. He saw that, notwithstanding my celebrity, I was a plain, unassuming old man; and as he evidently wished to make a good impression upon me, he at once assumed the manner in which he was sure to attain his purpose. Never have I seen anyone appear more simple, quiet, gentle and unpretending. There was nothing to remind one that he was a great monarch. He talked to me like an old acquaintance with an equal, and, what had never happened to any one of my rank, chatted for half-an-hour together, to the great surprise of all present. At length, about midnight, I began to feel that I could not bear to stand any longer; I took the liberty of begging his Majesty to let me take my leave. 'Allez donc,' he said with a friendly voice and manner, 'bon soir.'

"The more remarkable points of our conversation were these: The play which had just been performed brought up the subject of

Julius Cæsar. Napoleon observed that he was one of the greatest men in the history of the world, and would have been without exception the greatest but for one error. I was about to inquire to what error he alluded, but Napoleon read the question in my face and continued, 'Cæsar knew the men who wanted to put him out of the way, and he should have been beforehand with them.' Could Napoleon have seen what was in my mind, he would have read the answer, 'You, at all events, will never lay yourself open to such a charge.' From Julius Cæsar the conversation turned to the Roman people, whose military and political system were warmly praised by the Emperor, while the Greeks he characterised with profound contempt. What good could come, he asked, from their petty republics with their interminable squabbles? The Romans, on the contrary, were ever intent on greatness, and greatness they achieved—the mighty empire, whose enormous power made a new epoch for the world. I tried to say something for the arts and the literature of Greece, but he treated these two with contempt, affirming that they only served to make matters for dispute.

"He excepted Homer, whom he placed on a level with Ossian. In poetry, he valued only sublimity, energy, pathos. Of Ariosto and the poets akin to him he spoke in much the same terms as Cardinal Hyppolito d'Este, not recollecting that he was giving me a box on the ear. He seemed to have no liking for humour; and notwithstanding the flattering kindliness of his manner, he gave me the idea of a heart cast in bronze. At length, however, he had put me so much at ease that I ventured to ask him why, in reforming the religion of France, he had not made it more philosophical in character and more adapted to the spirit of the times. Napoleon answered with a smile, 'My dear Wieland, worship is not made for philosophers, they believe neither in me nor in my religion; and as for those who do believe, you can never have wonders enough. When I make a religion for philosophers, it shall be after quite another fashion.'"

Wieland received from Napoleon the order of the Legion of Honour, and from the Emperor Alexander of Russia, almost at the same time, the order of Saint Anne. He was not to be prevented by flattery, however, from raising his voice against the system of oppression the French rule had imposed upon his country.

But his active career was already over, and the infirmities of age were creeping on. In 1809 he all but succumbed to a severe illness. Even in the last stage of his life, his fondness for free and unrestrained social intercourse led to his becoming a Freemason. In 1812, the Amalia Lodge at Weimar, which he had joined, struck a medal to celebrate his eightieth birthday. The Brentano family, into which the daughter of Sophia de la Roche had married, had now acquired Osmanstadt,

and willingly granted him the site for a monument to himself, his wife, and Sophie Brentano. A simple, three-sided pyramid was placed on a hillock between the three graves, and inscribed with a distich from Wieland's pen commemorating the love and friendship that in life united the souls of those whose mortal part was covered by this common stone. All was now in readiness for his departure, and he said jokingly that he ought not to be kept long waiting. He was struck down by paralysis in January 1813, and took to his bed. His friends and descendants successively bade him farewell; and as his end approached he was heard repeating his own translation of Hamlet's soliloquy. As he came to the momentous words, "To be or not to be," it is recorded, his soul took flight. Wieland was buried with great pomp in the tomb prepared for him at Osmanstadt, the Lodge of Freemasons having undertaken the whole charge of the funeral.

Wieland wrote his *Don Sylvio de Rosalva* in 1764. It was first translated in 1769, into French. A second and abridged translation was published in 1771 by Madame d'Ussieux, under the title of the *Don Quichotte moderne*. Under the earlier title, this was republished in 1786 at Geneva, as the last volume (the thirty-sixth) of *Le Cabinet des Fées ou Collection choisie des Contes des Fées et autres Contes merveilleux*. It is a pretty little book, and charmingly illustrated. The English translation of Wieland's story, *Reason Triumphant over Fancy; Exemplified in the Singular Adventures of Don Sylvio de Rosalva. A History in which every marvellous Event occurs Naturally*, is a very scarce duodecimo in three volumes, published in 1773, and bearing the triple imprint, "London: Printed for J. Wilkie, at No. 71, St Paul's Church-Yard; S. Leacroft, at the Globe, at Charing-Cross, and C. Heydinger, No. 274, in the Strand." I have come across only one copy of it, that from which this edition has been printed. The anonymous translator has done his work well, the narrative often attaining a high level of English prose.

Outside his own country, where almost every important romance has had to stand the competition of the

most barefaced imitations, Cervantes has met with numerous imitators both in prose and verse. For the sake of any reader who may wish to pursue the comparison of their several aims and methods, I will enumerate the principal Quixotic novels written in English up to the year 1820. Charlotte Lennox, in *The Female Quixote; or, the Adventures of Arabella* (1752) portrayed a woman who has got all her ideas of life from reading romances of the Scudéri type. In every stranger she sees a knight-errant, and romantic adventures in the most trivial incidents; and she runs a course of the most extravagant folly until the reasoning of her friends restores her to sanity, when she marries a worthy man. It is not at all improbable that Wieland had read this book. Smollett wrote an amusing parody of *Don Quixote*, in fact a sort of double parody, for the hero of the tale has a foil in a madder knight-errant, who is a travesty of himself. This, *The Adventures of Launcelot Greaves*, is usually ranked among Smollett's minor works, and is probably but seldom read nowadays. Nor does that curious "comic romance" of the Reverend Richard Graves, entitled, *The Spiritual Quixote: or, the Summer's Ramble of Mr Geoffrey Wildgoose*, find many modern readers, although its editor, in 1816, stated that, "By occasionally introducing real characters and authenticated narratives, he has also diffused a charm over the whole, by which curiosity is excited, and gratified in the most pleasing manner." *The Heroine: or, the Adventures of Cherubina*, by Eaton Stannard Barrett, (1813), is another burlesque attacking the blood-curdling romances fashionable at that period. Crazed by reading these, Cherubina disowns her yeoman father, adopts a high-flown name, and has many absurd adventures in London, and in a deserted castle, where she tries to establish herself with a retinue of attendants. The Quixotic form of romance lends itself admirably to political purposes. I have in my hand, for example, a thin book in shabby boards, called *The Political Quixote: or, the Adventures of the renowned Don Blackibo Dwarfino, and his trusty Squire, Seditiono; a romance, in which are introduced many popular and celebrated political*

characters of the present day. This appeared in 1820, and was mainly a reprint of a series of sketches in Shadgett's *Weekly Review*, attacking such writers as Cobbett, Tom Paine, Sherwin, and Wooler, author of *Castles in the Air*.

Wieland's *Adventures of Don Sylvio*, although, like these, avowedly suggested by the great novel of Cervantes, is in purpose and spirit a totally different work from any of them. It certainly has no serious social object, the satire of abuses or the denunciation of foolishness, nor can it even be taken seriously as an attack on the innumerable fairy stories that were in such great vogue among the cultivated classes of Europe in Wieland's time. One must simply take it as a *jeu d'esprit*, written to please himself, and to divert the ladies of the circle at Warthausen. His vast and appreciative acquaintance with the great stock of fairy stories, modern, Medieval, and Oriental, is proved by the wealth of reference thereto. The best thing in the book, Don Gabriel's delightfully mad story of Prince Biribinquer, with its dazzling scenery and inexhaustible surprises, shows how he revelled in such imaginations. Wieland has simply taken *Don Quixote* as a suitable model for an entertaining fable: the ostensible thesis, which is the evil effects of an education based on such reading as *Pharamond*, *Clélie*, the *Grand Cyrus*, *The Adventures of the Twelve Peers*, and *The Knights of the Round Table*, with the other volumes in which, as Donna Menzia believed, "were to be found all the treasures of the most sublime and useful knowledge,"—this flimsy motive is merely put forward as a convenient theme for burlesque. Sylvio is not a real madman, like Don Quixote, but only a playful exaggeration of the dreamy sentimentality and the crazy enthusiasm that might be produced in a childish and superstitious mind by an ill digestion of such literature. No doubt there is a certain amount of satirical reference to the visionary ideas of his own youth. But there are no limits to Wieland's irony, and when he tries to class his novel among those books, "in which truth is spoken laughingly," and which teach wisdom and morality whilst they seem to

be intended merely to keep people in good humour, he is really poking fun at his reader. The whole of the first chapter of Book V., "in which the author has the pleasure to talk about himself," is a delightful example of Wieland's sportive irony. He says :—

"We very much doubt whether, since fairy tales first existed in the world, there ever was a lover protected by fairies—whether he were prince, knight, or shepherd, that saw or felt himself in such critical circumstances as those in which we left our hero at the close of the preceding book.

'Tis true, other heroes, travelling under the auspices of fairies, have their tribulations likewise: they are often obliged to wage war with dragons, sea-monsters, blue centaurs, and the like: they run the risk of being devoured by hyenas and chimeras; they are brought up by old toothless fairies, who put their virtue to the keenest trials, and at last turn them into paroquets, cats, or crickets. But, that ever a person so extraordinary as the favourite of a queen of the salamanders, and the lover of an enchanted blue butterfly, should be so terribly scratched and mauled by a parcel of country wenches, is what you may in vain look for an example of in the whole collection of all those histories that begin with that elegant phrase, there was once upon a time.

The benevolent reader will deduce the consequence; but, as perhaps he may not do so, the author hereby begs leave to inform him, that this palpable difference between the history of Don Sylvio, and all other tales of the fairies, inculcates a very favourable prepossession in regard to the historical fidelity and veridicity of the writer. Had we made our hero travel in a sapphire car, drawn by birds of paradise; had we made him descend every evening to some enchanted palace; had we given him the little red hat of Prince Hobgoblin, or the fairy Mustachio's slipper, or King Gyges' ring, or the royal fairy Trusio's enchanted wand, by means of which he might have extricated himself from all difficulties, then every child of ten years old must have perceived we had only been entertaining him with a fairy tale. But though our history is more extraordinary and more marvellous than any of those with which they once upon a time endeavoured to amuse the sage Schac Baham, Sultan of the Indies, yet nobody can reproach us with ever having made any adventure befall our hero, that does not perfectly coincide with the ordinary course of nature, or that may not be seen to happen every day: as for instance, that a frog should run the hazard of being swallowed up by a stork, or that a person should find a picture set round with diamonds, which probably some other might have lost before. Besides, we have made our hero travel afoot, without having even taken care to guard him against bogs and ditches. Has he been asleep?—It was only upon the hard ground, or in a miserable inn, where he is half devoured by fleas. Instead of nymphs with rosy arms, or sylphs with golden wings, to serve him with nectar and ambrosia on the flowery borders of crystal fountains, we have fed him with a pie, found in Pedrillo's wallet; and, still more recently,

we have seen him almost knocked at head, not by giants or enchanted blackamoors, but by simple country clowns."

Both the main story and the appended story of Prince Biribinquer would be merely nonsensical without this interfusion of playful irony. This it is which makes the following a perfect example of the burlesque style of fairy narrative :—

"I shall waive giving you the various private reflections which occurred to Biribinquer, and proceed to inform you that about noon, when the heat began to be insupportable, he alighted at the entrance of a forest, and sat himself down upon the bank of a rivulet which ran down under the shadow of some thick spreading trees. Soon after he perceived a shepherdess driving a little herd of pink-coloured goats before to water in the rivulet, just by the spot where Biribinquer was laid down in the shade.

"Imagine to yourself, Don Sylvio, how great must be his rapture, on recollecting in this young shepherdess his well beloved milkmaid. She now appeared to him a hundred times more lovely than when he first beheld her: but what rejoiced him most was, that instead of flying from him, she approached nearer and nearer to him. At length she seated herself upon the grass close beside him, seemingly as if she had taken no notice of his being there. The prince had not courage to speak to her, but threw at her such ardent glances as might almost have vitrified the flint stones at the bottom of the stream before him. The fair shepherdess, who must have been of a very cold constitution not to have been broiled by such powerful glances, was tying up, in the most composed manner imaginable, a garland of flowers, but could not help every now and then giving him a sidelong look, as it were by stealth. The prince thought there seemed to be no indignation in her countenance; and this rendered him so bold that he stole nearer to her unperceived, just as she was caressing a little she-goat, which, instead of hair, wore nothing but fine silver threads, and was all over bedecked with garlands and rose-coloured ribands. Biribinquer's looks glancing from this new-fixed point, said full as many clever things now as they had done before; while hers corresponded with them from time to time so politely that at length he could not help throwing himself at her feet, and, according to his custom, repeating to her in very poetical figures, what he had before told her in language much more intelligible and persuasive. Having finished his tender elegy, the beautiful shepherdess answered him with a look, the beginning of which was more cool than the close of it.

"'I know not,' said she, 'whether I have perfectly understood you: but did not you mean to tell me all this while, that you love me?'

"'That I love you!' cried Biribinquer, all transported, 'Heavens! say rather that I adore you, and could wish to yield up my soul thus languishing at your feet.'

"'Well, lookye,' replied the shepherdess, 'I am but a very simple girl: I neither wish you to adore me, nor that you should yield up your

soul, for I do not imagine you to have too much of it. I shall be satisfied if you do but love me. But I must tell you, it will be a more difficult matter to persuade me, than the fairy with whom you spent the evening yesterday.'

"'Gods!' exclaimed the prince, in the deepest confusion, 'what's this I hear! How is it possible—who can have given you—from whence could you learn—I know not what I say—oh! wretched Biribinquer!'

"Scarce had he uttered this fatal name, when the beautiful shepherdess set up a loud shriek.

"'Yes, wretched Biribinquer, indeed,' she cried, starting up with great precipitation, 'and must you again offend my ears with that detestable, unworthy name? You force me at once to hate and to fly from you, just when I——'

"Here the enraged Galactina was suddenly interrupted by a spectacle which equally prevented her and the prince from thinking of anything else but the object before their eyes. Advancing towards them they beheld a giant, whose forehead was encircled with a couple of young oaks twisted together instead of a diadem. The monster stalked forward, picking his teeth with a large pointed stake, and coming up to the shepherdess, spoke to her in so terrible and thundering a voice, that upwards of two hundred crows which had built their nests in his huge bushy beard, issued forth on all sides in the greatest hurry and confusion.

Don Sylvio is undoubtedly open to many criticisms, which may be left to the reader to apply. It is too long and elaborate for modern taste. Now we should expect such a slight theme to be treated on the scale of the "long short story." But it is extremely interesting, if only as an early example of prose fiction; and, though tastes have altered so much, it is a noteworthy fact that the fairy tales to which it owes its origin are now as much in fashion as ever they were in Wieland's time. But there is no need for me to stand any longer between the author and his story.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON SYLVIO DE ROSALVA, *a young gentleman of quality in Valencia, who plays the part of Don Quixote in an imaginary fairyland.*

PEDRILLO, *a body servant, his Sancho Panza.*

DONNA MENZIA DE ROSALVA, *his aunt and guardian, whom he takes for the fairy Fanfreluche.*

MRS BEATRICE, *her maid.*

SIGNIOR RODRIGO SANCHEZ, *an attorney of Xelva, who attempts to marry the aged Donna Menzia.*

MERGELINA, *his rich and ugly niece, who has similar designs on Don Sylvio.*

DONNA FELICIA DE CARDENA, *the youthful and lovely widow of a wealthy Mexican: plays in Sylvio's disordered mind the rôle of a fairy princess.*

LAURA, *her maid, the sylphid beloved by Pedrillo.*

DON EUGENIO DE LIRIAS, *a young gentleman of Granada, Felicia's brother.*

DON GABRIEL, *his friend and mentor.*

JACINTHA, *a beautiful girl of unknown birth, whom Eugenio loves.*

ARSENIA, *a benevolent actress, who protects Jacintha.*

MARITORNES, *a maidservant.*

PYRAMUS, *a groom.*

BLAS, *a barber.*

A GYPSY HAG, *who acts the part in the story of the fairy Carabossa.*



THE ADVENTURES

OF

DON SYLVIO DE ROSALVA

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

THE CHARACTER OF A CERTAIN SPECIES OF AUNTS

In an old ruinous castle, situated in Valencia, a province of Spain, lived some time since a lady of quality, who, at the time of acting her part in the ensuing story, had already, for threescore years, cut a very small figure in the world, under the name of Donna Menzia de Rosalva.

Ever since the war about the succession, this lady had given up all hope of distinguishing herself by her personal charms; though at that period she was young, and not disinclined to render a lover of merit happy. She had, however, suffered such sensible mortifications from the coldness of the men, as had more than once tempted her to make to Heaven, in the asylum of a convent, the sacrifice of a heart of which the world had shown itself so unworthy. Her prudence, notwithstanding, was always putting her

in mind, that this, like every other means suggested by vexation, seldom attained its end; and, in fact, would only punish the ingratitude of mankind upon herself.

She therefore, happily, thought of another expedient, which while, it cost her less trouble, was better calculated to favour the only design that in her present situation appeared worthy of her attention. She became a prude; determined to avenge her offended charms upon all those unfortunates, whom she had never failed to consider as clouds that intercepted and diminished her personal lustre. She declared herself the open enemy of beauty and of love; and, to mend the matter, set up as the protectress of all those venerable vestals, who are by nature endowed with the gift of transcendent chastity, and whose very aspect alone was capable of disarming the most resolute sylvan deity.

Donna Menzia did not content herself with that simple friendship, which a very intimate connection, sympathy, and their common lot had established between her and certain ladies of the same disposition, with whom she had been brought up at Valencia, and successively made an acquaintance. They thought proper to institute a kind of community among themselves, which, in the polite world, corresponded to that of the religious in the political world. That is to say, a state within a state, whose private interests require them to do every shrewd turn to others that lies in their power. Hence they acquired the name of "the anti-graces"; as being engaged, with respect to whatever is called the empire of love, in as open and implacable a war, as that of the Knights of Malta with the Mussulmen.

To render their assemblies as useful to the public, as they were agreeable to themselves, they chose for the object of their generous cares the progress of virtue and good manners among their own sex; for, according to them, the true and only source of all the

possible evils in the world, was the deplorable condition of these same manners. They laid it down as a principle of their morality, that it was impossible for a fine woman to be virtuous; and upon this principle they determined as well upon the actions, as upon the moral value of every person of that sex. A woman who pleased, was, in their eyes, a wretched lost creature, a pest to society, a vessel and instrument of Satan; a harpy, a hyena, a siren, an amphisbæna, or anything worse; in proportion as she had more or less of that dangerous venom, which, according to the system of these moralists, is as mortal to virtue, as it is flattering to self-love, and seductive to the poor men.

For more than fifteen years past had Donna Menzia made herself formidable to the beau-monde of Valencia by the austerity of her character, when Don Pedro de Rosalva, her brother, resolved to quit Madrid, where he had exhausted the remnants of an estate, most of which had been expended in the service of the new king. He had solicited a pension, which he could not obtain; and at length, too late, regretted the not having rather employed the ruins of his fortune in repairing an old castle he enjoyed, three leagues from Xelva, and which was the only patrimony left him by his forefathers.

His wife, whom he had lately lost, left him a son and a daughter, whose tender years, as well as the care of his little household, required the direction of a woman. He therefore devolved it to his sister, who wished for nothing more than to exchange the humiliations she had undergone at Valencia, for the pleasure of being the woman of highest distinction in a village;—a turn of mind, which, by the way, she had evidently derived from Julius Cæsar, who, on passing through a poor little town in the Pyrenean mountains, declared to his friends that "he had rather be the first there, than the second in Rome."

The chagrin which Don Pedro felt at seeing his

hopes frustrated, did not long permit him to enjoy the delights and freedom of a rural life; an advantage, indeed, unknown to his competitors, even to this day. He died, leaving to his son, Don Sylvio, a genealogical table of his family, which lost itself in the remote times of the Gargoris and Habides; an old castle with three towers tottering to its fall, and the appendage of a few farms. He left, moreover, to his children, the hope of succeeding to an inheritance, consisting of old trinkets, a pair of spectacles, some rosaries, and a large heap of books of chivalry and romance, which their aunt, Donna Menzia, would one day or other bequeath to them at her death.

Don Pedro died with greater satisfaction in the thought that he was leaving his son, hardly ten years old, in the hands of a lady so sage and prudent as Donna Menzia had always appeared to him. For that prodigious stock of reading which she possessed, in chronicles and books of chivalry, joined to the eloquence wherewith she displayed her extensive science; and above all her profound erudition in point of politics, as well as in matters of moral concern, with which she regaled her brother at every meal, and upon every possible occasion; all this had given Don Pedro an opinion of the lady's understanding, so much the more exalted, as the martial life he had always led had left him little leisure to acquire a better share of what the world calls polite erudition; saving, indeed, that little which a treacherous memory had still preserved to him from his studies when at school.

CHAPTER II

WHAT SORT OF EDUCATION DON SYLVIO RECEIVED FROM HIS AUNT

DONNA MENZIA did not contradict the good opinion which her brother had entertained of her abilities; for as soon as Don Sylvio had learned enough Latin from the vicar of the village, to comprehend Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and when the barber of the neighbouring hamlet had taught him music sufficient to accompany some dozens of old ballads on the guitar, Donna Menzia determined to take upon herself the care of forming the young man, and of giving him every perfection, which, in her ideas, could make him an accomplished cavalier.

It was rather unfortunate that Donna Menzia had picked up all those ideas respecting education in *Pharamond*, *Clelia*, *Grand Cyrus*, and other books of that stamp, which, with the *Adventures of the Twelve Peers of France*, and the *Knights of the Round Table*, constituted the chief part of her library. In these volumes, she conceived, were to be found all the treasures of the most sublime and useful knowledge, and therefore thought she could no way better instruct her young pupil, than by endeavouring to inspire him with those ideas, and with that taste, which herself had deduced from sources so pure. The happy disposition of young Don Sylvio in this respect, seconded her views so well, that before he had attained his fifteenth year, he was at least as learned as his noble aunt. At that tender age he already possessed as extensive a knowledge of history,

physics, theology, metaphysics, morals, politics, the art of war, antiquities, and belles-lettres, as any of the heroes of *Grand Cyrus* could ever attain. He could moreover reason with so much eloquence upon the most subtle questions in those sciences, that the footmen of the family, the vicar, the schoolmaster, and the barber above-mentioned, with other persons of distinction who had free access to the house, could never enough admire the wonderful talents of our young lord, and the infinite sagacity of his aunt in giving him such an education.

But what most charmed her in her nephew was the uncommon desire which animated him to imitate those sublime patterns, whose high deeds and moral virtues had transported him with admiration, and to which he had so familiarised his imagination, that he was at length persuaded it would cost him no more pains to put them in practice, than it had already done to conceive the idea of them. Donna Menzia, for her part, nothing doubted but that with inclinations so noble, and a turn of thought so heroic, Don Sylvio would in time be well enabled to act a great part in the world; and to equal in glory and happiness her most admired heroes, as he now yielded to none of them in beauty and personal accomplishments.

CHAPTER III

PSYCHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

It will afford much less astonishment at seeing the imagination of Don Sylvio take so singular an impression from an education still more singular, when we have observed, that among the other endowments he had received from Nature, she had profusely bestowed on him a very exquisite sensibility; and, what is its immediate concomitant, a strong disposition to tenderness.

Young persons of this sort are generally fond of all those ideas which make a lively impression upon the heart; which awaken, as it were, the slumbering passions, and spring up, as from a lethargy, at the slightest alarm.

If, besides this, it happens that such persons are brought up in a remote solitude and a rural simplicity, in places where they enjoy those natural pleasures which the country affords, free from its labours, and insensible of its inconveniences; in this case, the marvellous and impassioned ideas assume an empire over their hearts; which is so much the stronger, as in that situation fancy is ever busied to fill up the void, which the uniformity of sensible objects leaves in the soul. The imagination insensibly blends itself with the sentiment; the marvellous with the natural; the false with the true. The soul, which by a blind instinct works as regularly upon chimeras as upon certain truths, is formed by little and little from these collected parts into a whole, and becomes accustomed to take it for

truth, on the first glimpse of light and connection. The reason is, because the imagination is grown as familiar with chimeras, which are its chief ingredients, as the senses are with those real objects wherewith they are surrounded, without once perceiving the least change or alteration.

This was precisely the case with the young man who will be the hero of our history. The natural ingenuity of his soul rendered him incapable of suspecting that he could be deceived. His imagination therefore was impressed with those chimerical beings which the poets and dealers in romance exhibited to him, just in the same manner as his senses received the impression which natural things made upon them. The more agreeable he found the marvellous and the supernatural,* the more was he tempted to believe them true; and especially as he had no doubt of things the most incredible: for the ignorant believe everything possible. In this manner the poetical and enchanted world dispossessed his brain of the true; while the stars, elementary spirits, enchanters, and fairies, according to his system, were as certainly the movers of all nature, as gravity, attraction, elasticity, electrical fire, and other natural causes are, in the system of a modern philosopher. Nay, though in Nature herself, if observed with a fixed and minute attention, may be found the surest means of defence against the extravagances of fanaticism, yet, on the other hand, this same Nature seems to be the source of those very extravagances, by reason of the immediate impression she makes upon our souls, aided by the majestic spectacles which she exhibits.

That gentle tremor which seizes us on entering a labyrinth formed in an obscure forest, has doubtless given place to the universal belief, in past times,

* ——Ut omne
Humanum genus est avidum nimis auricularum.
LUCRET.

that woods and forests were inhabited by the gods. Those soft emotions, that stupefaction, that idea of expansion, and of the elevation of our nature, which we experience in a fine night, on beholding the heavenly canopy of stars, these evidently countenanced the opinion that this brilliant abyss of numberless inextinguishable lamps was the abode of immortal beings.

And hence very probably it arises that country people, whose continual labour leaves them no leisure to discriminate the confused impressions which nature makes upon them, or to conceive a clear idea of the subject, are more superstitious than others. Hence those corporeal spirits, which, in their notion, fill up the whole circle of creation; hence those unseen huntings in the woods; those fairies who dance in the fields their nightly round; hobgoblins good and bad; and the nightmare, oppressive to slumbering girls. Hence, in short, those spirits of the mines and floods; with men all-fire, and Heaven knows how many other fantastic beings, of which this class of people can tell you such a variety of tales, and whose reality, in their estimation, is a thing so demonstrative, that you must not venture to doubt or deny it, unless you mean to pass with them for an impious or a stupid creature.

Now, adding all these circumstances together, which jointly contributed to finish the romantic education of our young cavalier, we shall not perhaps think it difficult to comprehend his situation, and to see the little trouble it must have cost him to run into schemes as visionary, as extraordinary, as ever entered an unsettled brain, since the time of his countryman, the knight of La Mancha.

CHAPTER IV

HOW DON SYLVIO BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH FAIRIES

UNFORTUNATELY for his poor reason, among the various other books that filled a great room in the castle, Don Sylvio one day found out a quantity of fairy tales. His father, Don Pedro, it seems, had been a great admirer of this kind of literature, though often checked on that head by his venerable sister, who sharply censured his extravagant taste for such trifling stuff, as she was pleased to call it. For as much as she esteemed books of chivalry—ranging them in the same class with the chronicles, histories, and accounts of voyages and travels—so much did she despise all those trifling pieces of witticism, which at best are only fit to divert children, or perhaps to amuse grown men, and are solely indebted for a favourable reception to the pleasing manner in which they are written.

Don Pedro, in reply, honestly owned that they were but trifling stuff. "And yet," said he, "this trifling stuff enables me to pass away many an hour, that otherwise would be irksome to me: for the more droll I find this fool of an author's ideas, the more I laugh at them, and that is all I look for."

The sage Donna Menzia, who, like all whimsical folks, thought nobody's reveries rational but her own, was not satisfied with the ingenuity of this reply. However, in defiance of all she could urge, the *Arabian Nights*, the *Persian Tales*, novels, and the *Tales of the Fairies*, still kept peaceable possession of their place in the library; and being only stitched

up, for the most part, in blue paper, very modestly concealed themselves behind the respectables in folio and quarto belonging to Donna Menzia, so that, after the old gentleman's decease, they were entirely forgotten.

But, in all probability, the fairy who interested herself in the fortunes of young Don Sylvio, was determined that he should not fall short of his destiny, for, the latter being one day rummaging in the library, in order to select some amusing books in the absence of his aunt, whose great gravity and endless moral lectures began to weary him, there, either by chance or some secret impulse of the aforesaid fairy, he laid his hand upon a large parcel of fairy tales. Full of joy, he clapped them into his pocket, and retired into the garden with all possible expedition, to examine his good fortune without fear of interruption; for the first glance of the title already presaged to him the many fine things he should meet with in the contents.

The conciseness with which the tales in question were written was the principal motive that induced Don Sylvio to read them, as his aunt had so daily tired him with reading of dull and insipid folios for hours together. But as soon as he had run over one or two of these lighter studies, nothing could equal the pleasure they afforded him, and the avidity of his pursuit in getting through the rest.

There is a certain instinct in young folks, however simple they may be in other respects, that tells them what they ought to say, or to conceal from those who are set over them: this same instinct suggested to Don Sylvio by no means to apprise his dear aunt of the discovery he had made. At the same time, the restrictions he was obliged to labour under on that score only served to render the fairy tribe so much dearer to him; and we have no room to doubt but he would nightly have pursued their delightful acquaintance if, as Tasso once wished in his prison,

one could contrive to read by the light of a cat's eyes; for it may be necessary to inform the reader that the care which Donna Menzia took of Don Sylvio's health, joined to a certain economy in point of candles, had long since precluded our young gentleman from that means of enjoying his learned vigils.

But no sooner did day appear than he was ready, took his volumes from under his bolster, ran through one tale after another, and when his whole collection was exhausted, indefatigably began anew. To this end he retreated as often as possible into the garden, or an adjacent grove, carrying with him his favourite speculations. The vivacity with which his imagination feasted upon them was extraordinary: he did not read, but he saw, he heard, he felt the whole. A system of nature, more beautiful and surprising than all he had hitherto known, seemed to unfold itself to his view; and that mixture of the marvellous with the simplicity of nature, which characterises most illusions of this sort, was to him an infallible mark of their truth.

Nor was this circumstance so very difficult to a mind like his, already prepared, as he had been, by the kind of life he had always hitherto led. For ever since the commencement of his studies, when initiated into Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, no book that could give him any juster ideas had fallen into his hands. On the contrary, his present sentiments were strengthened and confirmed in him by the sanction of various authors in those times, when the Pythagorico-cabalistic philosophy was in high repute throughout all Europe; and these authors it was, who, by means of their systematical reveries, about planetary and elementary spirits, exorcisms, mystical numbers, talismans, and that pretended wisdom which was to render its possessors masters of all nature, had so powerfully engrossed his imagination, that even Babiole's wonderful nutshell, and the

web of cloth four hundred ells long, which the lover of the White Cat drew out of a grain of millet, and then six times together through the eye of the finest needle, had nothing at all in them that exceeded his comprehension.

Nothing, therefore, now hindered him from devoting himself entirely to the pleasure of studying the fairy tales, a prodigious quantity of which he at length found concealed under the old waste papers that covered the shelves of his library. These exquisite pieces surpassed each other in extravagance; and yet our hero found in them such a fund of amusement as he would not have bartered for all the diversions in the world.

At length, however, all his circumspection could not prevent his rigid and penetrating governess from discovering the reason of his frequent walks in the grove; accordingly, she read him a lecture, very learned, though at the same time very harsh and very tiresome. But all this, as it commonly happens, served only to redouble Don Sylvio's precautions, and, therefore, he took safer measures to conceal from his aunt his plans and inclinations.

To say the truth, Don Sylvio had always feared, though he never loved the old lady; judge then, how considerably this sentiment must have gained ground, since the filling of his brain with Florinas, Rosettas, Brilliantes, Crystallinas, and a thousand other imaginary beauties supernatural and divine! In short, he was now frequently tempted to take his good old aunt for a kind of Carabossa; and the tyranny of her government became of course every day more and more insupportable.

In vain, therefore, did Donna Menzia tell him whatever came uppermost. In vain were all her efforts of persuasion. Enchantments, palaces of diamonds and rubies, princesses enchanted, or shut up in towers or subterraneous palaces; together with those tender lovers, who, under the wondrous



protection of a good fairy, escaped all the subtleties of a bad one; these, and the like, still kept in his imagination the quiet possession they had gained. Don Sylvio read nothing else; dwelt and meditated on no other object: in short, as the poet observes of his favourite mistress, "'Twas all his thoughts by day, and all his dreams by night."



CHAPTER V

THE STRANGE INFATUATION OF DON SYLVIO. HIS LOVE FOR AN IDEAL PRINCESS

In a situation of mind so extraordinary, nothing was more natural than to see Don Sylvio run into the folly of wishing for the same adventures with those in the fairy tales, the relation of which had afforded him so much pleasure.

In a little while he went still further. He endeavoured to realise the chimeras that filled his head, and determined to transport himself, as far as possible, into the fairy world. Hence it was that he gave names to everything about him, like what he had met with in those bewitching tales. His pretty little dog, which was formerly called Amoret, he now named Pimpimp, because the princess Mirabella's dog had enjoyed the same appellation. He next conceived a disgust for an ash-coloured grey cat, with white feet, which had always been his favourite, and substituted in her stead another entirely white; which, in honour of the princess's White Cat, was fondled by him with all imaginable politeness.

He went every morning and evening to look at some painted panes of a window that lay half broken to pieces in a gallery belonging to the castle, in hopes of finding among them, like prince Hunchback, such paintings as might somehow develop to him his future fortunes; and twenty times a day would he run over every hole and corner of the castle, from top to bottom, to see if he could discover any enchanted armour, or any trap-door by which he might descend into some enchanted palace. He found, indeed, nothing that he sought for; and the bits of glass

showed him no more than knights armed, who, with rested lances, had from age to age been tilting at each other: our hero, however, had learned better than to despair. He was not yet eighteen years of age; and most of the tales had informed him that a prince or knight must be at least eighteen, before he undertakes adventures.

In the meantime, therefore, he constructed in a corner of his garden a sort of arbour, made of verdure, which was to resemble that castle of flowers in which the fairy Everfair commonly chose to retire from the importunities of her court, in order to enjoy those delicious moments she passed in the arms of her best-loved shepherd. This arbour of Don Sylvio's was contrived in the following manner: he arranged a few beeches in order, proper for the purpose, so that the trunks of them served for pillars to support the edifice; the lowest branches formed the flooring, and the upper ones the ceiling. The walls of this singular arbour were of myrtles, interwoven with roses and honeysuckles, and, behind all, a slope of green turf was so artfully thrown up, that the structure could hardly be perceived.

In this "Green Castle," as Don Sylvio was pleased to call it, he had ordered one smaller arbour to be made, which, to give it more of the fairy appearance, he decorated with the most beautiful butterflies he could catch in his ramblings through the neighbouring wood, and along the banks of the Guadalaviar, a little rivulet that ran at a small distance from his garden.

Here it was that Don Sylvio often passed a good part of the night, dwelling in fancy upon those wonderful adventures for which he sighed, and in which he proposed soon to engage. These fantastical reveries insensibly lulled him to sleep, and favourable dreams obsequiously pursued the adventures over which his waking meditations had so pleasingly rambled. A beautiful princess, whom he

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In a situation of mind so extraordinary, nothing was more natural than to see Don Sylvio run into the folly of wishing for the same adventures with those in the fairy tales, the relation of which had afforded him so much pleasure.

In a little while he went still further. He endeavoured to realise the chimeras that filled his head, and determined to transport himself, as far as possible, into the fairy world. Hence it was that he gave names to everything about him, like what he had met with in those bewitching tales. His pretty little dog, which was formerly called Amoret, he now named Pimpimp, because the princess Mirabella's dog had enjoyed the same appellation. He next conceived a disgust for an ash-coloured grey cat, with white feet, which had always been his favourite, and substituted in her stead another entirely white; which, in honour of the princess's White Cat, was fondled by him with all imaginable politeness.

He went every morning and evening to look at some painted panes of a window that lay half broken to pieces in a gallery belonging to the castle, in hopes of finding among them, like prince Hunchback, such paintings as might somehow develop to him his future fortunes; and twenty times a day would he run over every hole and corner of the castle, from top to bottom, to see if he could discover any enchanted armour, or any trap-door by which he might descend into some enchanted palace. He found, indeed, nothing that he sought for; and the bits of glass

CHAPTER VI

ADVENTURE OF THE GREEN FROG. HOW DON SYLVIO CAME NOT TO DISCOVER THAT THE FROG WAS NOT A FAIRY

THE idea of having an invisible enemy of this importance greatly disturbed our young hero. However, as in all the tales he never met with a prince persecuted by fairies or enchanters, who was not, at the same time, protected by another fairy, the flattering hope that he should not be made the first exception to the general rule somewhat supported his courage. And, as in the fairy world, no less than in this lower globe, it is rarely the custom to oblige persons from whom we do not expect, at least, as great services as those we offer them: upon this same principle, Don Sylvio wished for nothing so ardently as to find an opportunity of obliging one of those generous fairies.

On walking, therefore, one day in his garden, by the side of a ditch, he saw, on the other side, a cock-stork (though other accounts, without sufficient foundation, for certain reasons, say it was a hen-stork), ready to swallow a pretty little green frog, which was skipping about the grass, and croaking in a very audible manner.

Don Sylvio, from the emotion of his generous and compassionate heart, could not have failed to come in to the assistance of the poor frog, but the idea that possibly it might be a fairy—nay, perhaps that very identical frog which had rendered such singular services to the princess Musetta and her mother—this instantly gave him wings; accordingly, he sprung across the ditch, and, staff in hand, made at

this sworn foe to frogs, just at the moment he was about to swallow the innocent chorister. The stork abandoned his prey and fled, while the little animal leaped into the ditch without giving itself any concern to inquire the author of its safety from such impending ruin.

Don Sylvio stopped at the ditch-side for a while to see if his frog would not reappear in the shape of a beautiful nymph, or at least with a garland of roses upon its head, to requite him for the important services he had rendered it. There he waited for more than half an hour; but, to his great astonishment, neither nymph nor frog made its appearance.

This unlucky circumstance embarrassed him not a little: he could not comprehend an act of ingratitude so uncommon among fairies. "If," said he to himself, "it had been the little ugly Magotine, old Ragotta, or the fairy Cucumber, a service of this nature might, at least, have demanded some acknowledgement from her:" but soon after, recollecting himself, "It is not impossible," said he, "but that she may at present be incapable of appearing before me in her own proper shape: nay, probably, there may be other reasons determining her to defer her gratitude till some future occasion on which she may afford me more essential services."

In short, after having well considered the matter, this conjecture appeared to him so plausible, and at the same time suited so well his chimerical wishes, that he returned perfectly satisfied to his "Green Castle," not allowing himself a moment's doubt, but that his late adventure would soon produce a considerable change in his destiny.

Some of our readers may possibly be surprised to think how Don Sylvio could be so silly as not to draw from the event a very contrary conclusion which naturally presented itself; namely, that the green frog was not a fairy. But, with their permission, we would observe that they have not, perhaps,

sufficiently weighed either the force of prejudices, or their own experience. Nothing is more common among mankind than this species of false reasoning; passion and prejudice never adopt any other.

An old fool, who fancies he has purchased by his profuse presents the fidelity of his mistress, attributes the sparkling eye and glowing cheek, with which she receives him, to her joy at his coming, never reflecting how much more consistent it would be to place them to the account of some younger inamorato, who, shut up all the while in a private corner, is laughing at the old dotard's credulity and importance.

An Indian buys amulets * of his Bonzé † to cure all sorts of diseases; this same Indian falls sick, and his amulets leave him just where he was. What does he conclude from thence?—that these charms have not the power to cure him, or that the Bonzé is an impostor? No, by no means. All that he concludes is, that he has not shown devotion enough to the idol whose image he wears at his neck; or that he has not been sufficiently liberal in his alms to the Bonzé.

No people think themselves of greater consequence than those of whom the rest of the world think nothing at all. It might therefore be very unreasonable to wish that such persons would attribute our contempt of them, and which they readily suppose is the effect of envy, to a far more natural cause, viz., that it is impossible for another to have that partiality in our own favour, which we are so apt to entertain for ourselves.

One might quote a variety of examples in proof of the fact above mentioned. It does not, indeed, lessen the follies of Don Sylvio, but it may suffice to say in excuse for him that his mode of reasoning is not at all more absurd than that of many other very good kind of people.

* A sort of medical charm, hung upon some part of the body.
† A Chinese or Japanese priest.



CHAPTER VII

DON SYLVIO FINDS THE PORTRAIT OF HIS DEAR IDEAL PRINCESS IN AN ALMOST MIRACULOUS MANNER

A FEW days after the adventure of the green frog, Don Sylvio took a walk in the grove by break of day, in search of butterflies, as he still wanted a few more to complete the decoration of his arbour.

He had already gone above three miles from his castle, when he beheld a butterfly of singular beauty, perched upon a flower, at a few paces distance from him. Its wings were of a sky blue, edged with purple, and shining like gold in the sun. Don Sylvio thought to have caught it, but the volatile little creature got from under his straw hat, and hid itself among some of the thickest bushes.

"Oh, but," cried Don Sylvio, "thou shalt still be mine, though I were to pursue thee even to the subterraneous regions of King Mutton, where it rains mince-pies, and roasted partridges grow upon every tree."

The butterfly, proud of the advantage its wings had afforded, seemed determined to spare him so long a journey, and had scarce disappeared, when Don Sylvio again discovered it sitting upon a rosemary branch, a little way before him. Again he strove to catch it, but again, as before, the blue charmer seemed to laugh at him; sometimes flying about in little circles round him; now resting itself for a moment; and then, just as he was laying his hand upon it, darting away to some new place of safety.

This pursuit, in short, continued so long, that at

length Don Sylvio perceived he had wandered into a part of the country hitherto wholly unknown to him. At first, he repented his having so deeply engaged himself for the sake of a poor butterfly, but, since the matter had gone so far, he was determined not to bestow this much labour in vain, and therefore indefatigably continued the chase, till happily he had the good luck to seize the little victim which had cost him more pains than ever prude cost her lover, since the species existed.

His joy was great beyond measure; indeed, one should hardly meet with a butterfly of more extraordinary beauty. Long and eagerly did he contemplate his little captive with a pleasure proportioned to the trouble it had given him in the chase, when lo! just as he was about to enclose it in a small cage which he had brought with him for the purpose, it seemed to him as if his beautiful prisoner looked upon him with an air of supplication, and with cowering wings; in short, at length—so fertile was his imagination—he even fancied he could hear his butterfly sending forth as audible a sigh as ever shot from the bosom of any of its tribe.

There needed no more to throw Don Sylvio into his usual train of visionary ideas. It appeared to him not at all improbable that this butterfly might, at least, be some fairy or enchanted princess: "And surely," said he, "if the princess Burzelina was changed into a grasshopper, why may not another be so changed, in form of a butterfly?" From that instant, therefore, he determined to restore to his charming captive that liberty which she seemed to supplicate with such pathetic importunity.

The butterfly, thus set free, took flight again with all imaginable satisfaction, followed by Don Sylvio, in the keenest expectation of some notable event, when, as good luck would have it, he perceived something, in his career, lying upon the grass a few steps before him, which entirely engrossed his

attention. He took it up, and what should it be but an elegant sort of trinket set round with large brilliants, and fastened to a string of the finest pearls. Don Sylvio turned it about on all sides; but how great was his astonishment when, on putting his finger by chance upon a spring which he had not observed, a large turquoise slipped from the middle and displayed to him a miniature picture, in enamel, highly finished, representing a shepherdess of uncommon beauty!

The spectacle before him struck our hero motionless for some minutes; he was in doubt whether or no to believe his eyes: he examined, turned, and handled the portrait again and again, to be convinced if it was anything more than imagination. But the more he contemplated, the more was he persuaded it could be no other than the picture of a goddess, or, at least, of the most beautiful mortal that the world ever did, or ever will produce.

Our fair readers will the more readily pardon Don Sylvio his too precipitate judgment when they consider with their usual candour the situation of this young man; that he had been brought up by an aunt (who, for reasons well known, saw but little of the world), in so close a retirement, that, excepting this dear aunt, and her chambermaid, the widow of one Signior Escudero (who, though fifty years old, would never own more than thirty-five), together with fat Maritornes, and the peasants' wives in the village; excepting these, he had never seen any that could properly be called the fair sex; for his sister, who was truly a pretty little girl, had been carried off, when she was but five years old; and it was strongly suspected that a gipsy woman, who had been seen lurking about the castle at that period, had stolen her away.

It was very natural, therefore, to suppose that Don Sylvio must have been exceedingly smitten with the beauty of this fair shepherdess, who, in comparison

with the other figures to which his eyes were necessarily accustomed, appeared to him in the same light that Latona appeared to the inhabitants of Delos, when they came croaking around her, transformed into frogs. In short, it seemed impossible to Don Sylvio that Gratiosa, Belbella, the Nymph of the Golden Locks, or Venus herself, could ever have been so handsome; accordingly he became so enamoured of this portrait from the first moment he saw it, as never knight-errant or Arcadian shepherd had been before with his Dulcinea or Amaryllis.

"At length," all in an esctasy he exclaimed, "at length I have found her! Her, whom I have everywhere sought for, with so much desire, and so high expectations! Her, whom I am destined to love; in short, by whom, unless a too presumptuous hope deludes me, my happy destiny is fixed, to be rendered by her love equal in felicity to the gods! Propitious kind fairy who takest charge of me, to thee alone I owe this surprising and unexpected favour! What other than thou could have placed this divine portrait in my path amidst this lonely desert, where, perhaps, never human footstep was found before. Oh! accomplish thy blessings; show me now; and, while prostrate at thy feet, give me to know where I may trace out her whose picture alone suffices to kindle in my heart an inextinguishable fire: for here, by every god propitious to love, I swear that never shall quiet sleep seal up my eyes, till I have found her out, though it were distant as the lake of quicksilver, or in the midst of monsters guarded by the fairy Leæna; nay, though it lay in the house of Saturn, or even in that great flagon of which fairies themselves make use of."

Thus having said, he sware.

The sylvan train all heard him,
And the nymphs and fairies round—
Gay! —

What an epidemical fever is this

attention. He took it up, and what should it be but an elegant sort of trinket set round with large brilliants, and fastened to a string of the finest pearls. Don Sylvio turned it about on all sides; but how great was his astonishment when, on putting his finger by chance upon a spring which he had not observed, a large turquoise slipped from the middle and displayed to him a miniature picture, in enamel, highly finished, representing a shepherdess of uncommon beauty!

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Thus having said, he sware.

> The sylvan train all heard him,
> While the nymphs and fairies round—
> Heigh-day!——

and in heroics too! What an epidemical fever is this



same enthusiasm! The enraptured apostrophe of Signior Don Sylvio surprised us before we were aware; and if Apollo had not twitched us gently by the ear in time, our poor readers were in danger of sustaining a deluge of verse before we had once suspected that our brain was touched. Here, then, let us rest awhile, leaving our blood time to flow more coolly, and in common prose, before we pursue the thread of this true history.

CHAPTER VIII

THE AUTHOR'S REFLECTIONS WITH THOSE OF DON SYLVIO

"SOME think to pick truffles and get nothing but turnips," said the sententious Sancho to his master on a certain occasion. Nothing, indeed, happens more frequently than to seek one thing and find another. Saul went in search of his father's asses, and found a crown; Don Sylvio hunted butterflies and found a beautiful girl, or at least her picture.

Being, therefore, in the highest degree enamoured with the portrait, his only care was how to get at the original; for, though he certainly knew the features of his well-beloved, still he remained ignorant who she was, and where to find her.

It is easy to conceive what a common man would have done in Don Sylvio's situation; but this was no concern of his. Our hero neither did, nor thought anything like other men. Those ideas which would first and most naturally have occurred to every other man were what he either very cautiously adopted, or never admitted at all: so that whenever any singular accident befell him, he instantly assigned to it such a cause, as, according to the course of nature, was of all others the most improbable.

Might not this portrait or miniature be a mere fancy painting? or was it not possible it might represent a person long since dead? and of course, was it not likely that Don Sylvio might be in Prince Seyf-el-Mouluk's situation, who, according to the Persian tales, fell in love with a mistress of King Solomon's about two thousand years too late?

But these were a sort of ideas that never entered the head of our hero. The more he thought of his morning's expedition, the more did every circumstance convince him that this was the commencement of some adventure as extraordinary as ever prince or knight yet met with.

But what step was he now to take? Where shall he seek his beautiful shepherdess, or of whom shall he inquire about her? The blue butterfly, who was most likely to have informed him, had disappeared; not to say that it might have been too hazardous to have pursued his way at all adventures, in the midst of a forest, where some one of his invisible enemies, whose malice he already experienced in his imagination, by so many proofs, might as probably mislead him into some unlucky path, as his better fortune could point out to him the safe and good.

After many reflections, therefore, which were often interrupted by the contemplation of the fair portrait in his hand, Don Sylvio judged it the safest method to rest awhile and see whether the blue butterfly would not pay him another visit with more certain intelligence of his princess: for it was already decided in his own mind that the little volatile was a fairy; and as, by thus introducing him to the picture in question, she had now begun to demonstrate her gratitude for the liberty he had granted her, he had no doubt but that she would continue to show him the happy effects of her favour..

Pimpimp, his little dog, who, except speaking, no way yielded in gentility or understanding either to Princess Mirabella's spaniel, or little Toutou, was now in search for his master through the wood, and great was the joy on both sides when at last he found him.

Don Sylvio, it seems, had just recollected that it was now almost noon; he was, therefore, very glad to have picked up a guide that could conduct him home, and extricate him from the wood into which he had never before advanced so far. His dinner,



too, became a material consideration; for all enchanted as he was, and as lovers are and may be to the end of time, it is nevertheless indisputable (as a celebrated writer observes), that the mode of living whole years without meat and drink, and of feeding entirely upon love, is nowadays so altered, that even the most sublime and animated lover is pretty much in the same case with a professed epicurean; a change, however, which, according to our small judgment, we cannot disapprove, and the rather, as we are persuaded, that the fair sex are likely to lose nothing by the event.

At length Don Sylvio reached the house, with his treasure that chance had bestowed upon him in his hand, and which, in the course of his walk, he had so diligently contemplated, that at every step he took, he either stumbled, or hit his head against some tree or other.

His adventure afforded him much food for reflection by the way, and gave birth to the most unaccountable ideas. He imagined it very probable for the portrait in question to be that of the fairy herself, who had appeared to him in the shape of a blue butterfly. "Possibly," said he—nor is it the first time that a mortal has received such an honour—"possibly she herself may love me, and hence, may have determined to try what impression her real figure would make upon me."

This was an idea so flattering, that he dwelt upon it with pleasure a good while: at length, however, it necessarily gave place to others, which lasted him till he got home. In fine, the blue butterfly and the fair shepherdess led his imagination so extraordinary a dance, as to argue no absurdity in those who should soon look for it to produce effects of a very singular nature.

To consider the follies of our young cavalier—follies which, by the way, always increase the further they proceed—one would hardly suppose that the



unsettled state of his brain should remain a secret to his aunt; nor, indeed, could it have escaped her penetration had the lady herself had leisure to observe his condition. But, not to mention that the youth was now seventeen years old, and, therefore, did not so much seem to require her close attention, his aunt had for several weeks past been otherwise engaged in a certain affair which obliged her to be frequently absent from home on visits to a little neighbouring town.

This affair must evidently have been of no small consequence to her, for, whenever she returned from the scene of her engagements, an unusual pensiveness and perturbation sat visibly on her countenance. Household matters so seldom engrossed her concern; she talked so much to herself, and so little to others; and, in giving orders to the domestics, so often mistook one thing for another, that all the family, except her nephew, were struck with the alteration.

It will readily be supposed that a variety of conjectures were passed respecting the causes of this great change; but the circumspection of Donna Menzia and the discretion of Mrs Beatrice were so well managed that the whole remained a mystery. There, accordingly, we shall leave it for the present, till time, which at length discovers all, shall have brought it to that state of maturity in which secrets of this kind naturally betray themselves.

CHAPTER IX

SEQUEL OF THE ADVENTURE WITH THE BUTTERFLY. THE READER IS INTRODUCED TO A NEW ACQUAINTANCE

THE faithful Pimpimp had so good a scent as to get home just as the family were sitting down to dinner. A profound silence reigned at the table, and Don Sylvio, as will easily be conceived, was not at all disposed to interrupt it. He was too deeply absorbed in his private meditations, to perceive how much his dear aunt was enveloped in her own. As little did he observe that his aunt was dressed uncommonly fine, and every now and then primmed and adjusted herself at the looking-glass that hung before her, though the scene appeared so highly diverting to Pedrillo, who waited at table, that to prevent his bursting out into a downright horse-laugh, he was forced to bite his lips.

The cloth being taken away, Donna Menzia announced to her nephew that she was obliged to go to town upon business and should not return till next day.

Don Sylvio understood matters too well, to show the least curiosity before his aunt concerning the nature of her business; but it really cost him nothing, for he had no curiosity at all about it. Accordingly, they parted, to the mutual satisfaction of both, and the moment she had got out of sight, our young spark left the house without acquainting any of the family where he was going.

As it was customary with him to take an after-

noon's nap * in his "Green Castle," nobody perceived his absence till near supper time; and then they went in search of him about the house, in the garden, fields, and woods, but all in vain. Every now and then they called him by his name, but no Don Sylvio appeared.

The whole family, during the absence of Donna Menzia and Mrs Beatrice, her faithful chambermaid, consisted of the above-mentioned Pedrillo, a young lad of the village, who was kept to wait upon Don Sylvio, together with the cook-maid, a groom, and the fair Maritornes of whom we have already spoken. These four good folks were in no small tribulation at being unable to learn what was become of their young master, for they all alike loved him on account of his sweetness of temper and affability. After having sought for him, therefore, a great while by moonlight, they returned home, and went to bed, concluding, as they could not find him, that he might possibly be gone to join his aunt at the little village she went to, which was only about six or eight miles distant from the castle.

Pedrillo, who had often accompanied his master, and was not ignorant of his passion for fairy notions, was the only one that doubted upon the subject. But, after deliberating a while, it came into his head, that possibly some adventure or other, in his usual walk, might have led him upon a ramble among the woods. Accordingly, he got up next morning by daybreak, and hunted after him in every copse and shady spot, but with as little success as the night before; when, just as he was about to return home, he discovered a grotto dug in a rock, covered over with honeysuckles, at the front of which stood a double row of laurels, planted round about the rock in a circular form.

* The original is *La siesta;* a Spanish term, to signify the time for sleeping in the shade in warm climates, during the heat of the day.

Now though Pedrillo had all the air of a simpleton, he was by no means destitute of understanding, nor, indeed, was his reading in books of chivalry and fairy tales much inferior to that of Don Sylvio; no sooner, therefore, had he reached sight of the place, than he conjectured from its romantic appearance, that, very probably, he might find his master there. His conjecture for once was right, for, on entering the grotto, he beheld him lying in a profound slumber, upon a bed of moss and flowers; little Pimpimp slept at his feet; his guitar lay beside him, and the portrait of his fair shepherdess was hanging at his neck.

Pedrillo, who had never seen the picture before, was dazzled with the lustre of the precious stones and pearls that sparkled on all sides of it; and though he hardly knew anything of jewels, these appeared to him of more value than a dozen such villages as his own. Long, therefore, and earnestly did he consider it, without regarding the portrait, and stood at a loss to comprehend where Don Sylvio could have picked up so precious a trinket. At length, his curiosity became so eager that he could scarce help venturing to wake his master: however, he did not; for though a poor country lad, and the son of a peasant, Pedrillo had more politeness than any of his rank in Andalusia. The only expedient left him was to take up his master's guitar, which he thrummed as loudly as he possibly could, and accompanied with his voice; but all to no manner of purpose.

At length, in a violent pet, he cried out, "Gadzooks! this must be out of nature; 'tis either all enchantment, or I am the greatest fool in the world. Nay, who knows but the charm may all lie in this gewgaw; could I but be sure of that—let me see—'twere best to tear it from his neck; or, if not, break it to pieces where it is. Surely, this would be better than to let my young master sleep here, like a dormouse, for a thousand years together!"

So saying, he determined to seize the trinket, but as ill luck would have it, the string somehow rubbed against Don Sylvio's neck so hard that it waked him. The young gentleman was at first too drowsy to be able to open his eyes; and this so prevented his knowing who it was that disturbed him, that in the bustle, he took Pedrillo for somebody that wanted to rob him of his beloved shepherdess.

Our hero accordingly flew into a violent rage at so heinous an attempt. "Oh, cursed enchantress," he exclaimed, "is it not enough to have deprived this innocent princess of her divine beauty, and to have changed her into a wretched butterfly? — wouldst thou also wrest from me the only thing that can render life supportable under the burthen of my disgrace? But know, that before I resign this sacred pledge, sooner shalt thou tear from my bosom that heart on which her image is engraven in characters of the purest flames."

"For Heaven's sake!" cried Pedrillo, in amazement, and retreating to the entrance of the grotto, "what do you mean, sir, by these extravagant speeches? I am neither enchanter nor necromancer, God help me! I am your servant Pedrillo, sir, born of as right old Christians as any one in the parish.* And sorry I am, after having sought for you in every corner of the globe, to find you in this cursed grotto, and in a perilous condition. What are you talking about enchanters and butterflies turned into princesses? Heaven knows, I looked for no good from the first, when I saw you sleeping here."

"And art thou Pedrillo?" answered Don Sylvio, rubbing his eyes. "If thou art Pedrillo—as in truth thy appearance leads me to believe—'tis well. The reproaches I threw at thee regard thee not, for

* We are told that there is not a peasant in Spain without a roll of his pedigree: every one can show that he is descended in a right line from the old Gothic Christians, who assisted their King Pelagius in expelling the Infidel Moors.

I took thee for some other person. But what did you want with this picture ?"

"With what picture ?" demanded Pedrillo.

"Oh, thou villain !" exclaimed Don Sylvio, "I tell thee, the picture which thou wast on the point of stealing from me, had not an invisible hand awakened me to prevent so dire a disaster."

"Bless my soul, Don Sylvio," replied Pedrillo, "methinks you are either dreaming, or something worse ! We were hunting after you all yesterday evening, God help us ! till the hour that spirits walk, but all in vain. To-day, early in the morning, I have been coursing through the woods, and running into every bush and covert ; at length, I found you asleep in this cave : here I saw that bauble, and, finding that you slept too soundly, I fancied it might be from the effect of some talisman,* that had buried you in this everlasting slumber till somebody or other should break the talisman to pieces, as I have found many examples of that kind in the large thick books that lay in our most gracious mistress, Donna Menzia's, library. Now, because I love you, and because you put me in fear that possibly you might be in Demonion's case, who was one day enchanted by the goddess Diana, and laid asleep for a hundred years together, that she might have the pleasure of kissing him as much as she liked.—Oh, the old amorous sorceress !—But you know the story, sir ; I found it in an old book which I purchased out of my grandmother's allowance for thirty maravedis,† though it was unbound and without a title ; there were a vast many painted figures in it that pleased me mightily when I was a little boy ; and then my grandmother would read me the stories by the side of those pictures. Oh, the good old woman : 'tis

* A talisman ; a magical configuration or image, made under some celestial sign ; which was pretended to be endowed with a virtue of working miracles, such as curing diseases, preserving from hurt, etc.

† A maravedis is a little Spanish coin.

just as if I saw her now before me; God have mercy on her! But what was I saying?—Oh! and so, you see, because you made me very uneasy, as I said before, and was to lie sleeping so long a time, I was a-going to break the talisman. Now, sir, do ye see, this is the whole story, so that I don't think you had reason to fall into a passion with me, as you have done."

Whatever inclination Don Sylvio might have had to be angry, he could not help laughing, to hear Pedrillo ramble in this manner. "Well, hold thy tongue, Pedrillo," said he, "'tis enough that thou hadst no ill intention, but I assure thee, thou wast upon the point of doing me a very shrewd turn. It is but too true that I am enchanted by what thou callest a talisman; but rather would I lose my life, than permit any one to break the charm. I have this night learned things of high importance, but ask me not what they are: thou shalt know more in due time, for I have need of thy services. I cannot tell thee more at present."

Pedrillo could not comprehend a syllable of this discourse, which only served to inflame his curiosity the more. "Sir," said he, as they walked home, "I will ask you no questions. You have forbidden me, and I know very well the respect I owe you. For, in the first place, you are my lord, because I am of your own village; and in the next place, you are my master, since I am your waiting-man, and I eat your bread; for, although Madam Menzia governs the whole house, I know pretty well who pays the reckoning. Ah, sir," continued he, "simple as you may think me, yet I know what's what, I promise you; you may take my word for it. I shall, therefore, neither be curious nor ask questions, how important soever the matters may be which I am not to inquire after; for why, sir, you cannot tell me them yet, though you are resolved I shall know 'em at a proper time. I think you said so, sir? And yet one

thing is vastly odd: methinks I myself am almost as much enchanted as you are, for formerly I could understand everything you said; but ever since I have touched that talisman, 'tis as if you spoke nothing but Hebrew. Let me die if I have understood a single word of all we have been talking about. I have often heard say, that knowing a vast deal only gives one the headache; but if one did but know where you had passed last night, when we were hunting for you all the world over, one might then, perhaps, be able to guess a little. But I say no more. You might possibly suppose I was inquisitive and wanted to ask questions; but curiosity is not among my failings. Whatever does not touch me can't disturb me. For example, if I was inquisitive, I might have wanted to know why my lady went to town so often for this week past; for, between you and I, sir, though I say it, and should not, I can assure you I am not indifferent to Mrs Beatrice, whatever you may think. Oh, marry go to, 'tis a sly gipsy, that same Madam Beatrice, though the rosary * at her girdle is as big as an old hermit's, and to see her walk, you'd think she was treading upon eggs. Still waters are generally the deepest, and they are not all cooks that wear long knives. However, one word's as good as a thousand. You must know, sir, I was going by her chamber yesterday, and the moment she saw 'twas me (for the door stood half open) she called to me to come in and pin her handkerchief; but I can't tell how it was, instead of fixing it to her back, I did just the contrary. In short, I could no way manage it at all. Upon this she said nothing, but laughed at my awkwardness; and, heavens forgive me, I should have stood there till now, if my lady had not rung the bell. The first time she rung, we heard nothing

* A rosary is composed of various rows of beads, and is used by Roman Catholics, to keep account of their Ave Mary's, Paternosters, and other devotions, as they repeat them.

of it, I was so busy; but she soon returned to the charge, and gave such a peal, that Mrs Beatrice told me, 'I must go to her, Pedrillo, or my lady will scold me: had I known,' said she 'that you were so awkward, I certain should not have called you, for you see how long you have been, and now, at last, I must fasten it on myself.' Upon saying which, away she went. But, pray, sir, what was it I was going to tell you—oh, it was about, I might have wished to know why my lady went so often to town, and who she went to, and all how and about it; but, as I said before, the handkerchief put it all out of my head. You see, then, I am not curious, not I; for Mrs Beatrice was in so good a humour, that I believe she would have told me everything."

In this manner did Pedrillo continue chattering all the way he came, while Don Sylvio gave not the least heed to anything he said, so deeply was he engaged in his own wild meditations. But scarce had they reached home when his stomach put our hero in mind that he had eaten nothing for the last four and twenty hours. For, as we have before observed, the stomach is above all enchantment. He therefore ordered his breakfast to be got ready, consisting of an omelet,* and some chickens fricasseed, which he dispatched with so good a grace as revived Pedrillo's sinking spirits, and gave him a better opinion of his master's intellects; far better than he had entertained of them while he ran on so strangely about transformations, princesses, and enchanted butterflies.

* A sort of pancake made of eggs; a common dish in Spain.



CHAPTER X

IN WHICH FAIRIES, SALAMANDERS, PRINCESSES, AND GREEN DWARFS MAKE THEIR APPEARANCE

As soon as the heat of the day was over, Don Sylvio retreated into the garden, accompanied by his faithful Pedrillo, and seated himself in a bower composed of jessamine, which was the shadiest spot he could find. There, after having strictly enjoined Pedrillo not to interrupt him, as was so commonly the case, he related to him in the most circumstantial manner everything that had happened to himself from the adventure of the green frog to the moment in which Pedrillo found him sleeping in the grotto.

We shall pass over in silence all that our readers have been already informed of, and only take up the narration from the period of his elopement, which had given so much uneasiness to his domestics.

"As soon as my aunt was gone," continued he, "I returned to the grove to look for the place where the blue butterfly had disappeared; and where, in her stead, she had left me this portrait, on which at present all the happiness or misery of my life depends. I took little Pimpimp with me, in hopes that, being prompted by instinct, he might better re-conduct me into the road we had taken together, and which I could not very well recollect. Nor was I deceived; I found out the same spot; and, after very carefully running over and searching it, in hopes of meeting with something that might any way inform me whom the portrait belonged to, I resumed my course through the wood, to see if 'twere possible to trace

out the blue butterfly, who, since the adventure of the portrait, no longer appeared to me to be of any ordinary species. 'If it be a fairy,' said I to myself, 'as I have good reason to believe, perchance she may be touched with the solicitude in which she beholds me; nay, perhaps, too, she may render herself visible to these eyes, in order to give me that necessary intelligence without which I know not how to live.'

"I accordingly made a general search through all the wood; I found butterflies enough, but no blue butterfly. The night was already far advanced, and Pimpimp was so tired that he could get no farther; nor was I much less so, when luckily I discovered that grotto where you found me, and resolved to pass the night in it. I threw up a bed for myself, and Pimpimp went asleep by my side, while I lay awake, musing upon my present situation. The moonlight at length shone so very fine, that it induced me to get out, and take a little turn in the alley that stood before the grotto.

"I had not been long walking, when all on a sudden I was struck with a burst of light that instantly seemed to gild the trees and bushes on all sides. I looked up very attentively at this phenomenon, which appeared to be a globe of fire, and to move in a higher sphere than the moon itself. At length it insensibly descended toward the place where I stood. You cannot conceive, Pedrillo, the joy which this apparition gave me."

"Joy, sir!" exclaimed Pedrillo; "joy! Why, one would really suppose you were not made like other people. I, myself, sir, for example, should have died with terror at seeing such a globe; and you even rejoice at it!"

"Now, did not I tell you that I would not be interrupted?" replied Don Sylvio. "I tell you again, I *was* rejoiced, and had good reason so to be; for well I knew it was a fairy, and my

heart sufficiently suggested to me that it was the same I sought. My expectations were not deceived: the globe of fire, which continually increased in size as it came nearer, burst at length with a prodigious noise a little over my head; and instead of it, I beheld a lady of wonderful beauty seated on a chariot made of carbuncles, drawn by two winged serpents of a flame colour. Around her fluttered upon a thin silver cloud a multitude of salamanders, in the shape of little boys, winged, and of a supernatural beauty. Their hair appeared like Titan's curling beams; their wings were flames, their bodies whiter than the snow in sunshine; their foreheads and cheeks more radiant than the splendours of Aurora. The lustre of the fairy herself, however, effaced the whole; 'twas, in short, so dazzling, that I must have lost my sight, had not the gentle fairy taken the precaution of touching me with her wand.

"'Don Sylvio,' she began, 'I am the fairy Radiante, whose life thou didst preserve in the day when thou beheldest me under the shape of a little green frog; that life, on which, however despicable it might then appear, depended the glories wherein thou now surveyest me. Thou knowest that in every hundred years, we are necessitated to assume, for the space of eight days together, the figure of some bird or other animal; and that during this period, we lose the exercise of all our powers, and are exposed to all those accidents which await the animal nature. The eight days in which I was necessitated to be a green frog were within a few hours of being elapsed, when the pleasure of beholding myself again in my natural shape made me neglect the precaution of keeping within the ditch; and thus I exposed myself to the danger which, without thy generous assistance, must have cost me my life. The terror which I felt on being just in the stork's beak hindered my thanking thee immediately for my deliverance; and as in a few hours

after I resumed my usual shape, I could not help giving my first moments to the affairs of the salamanders, whose queen I am. So soon, however, as I had any time to think of my own private concerns, I recalled to mind my high obligations to thee; and have since thought of little else but how to testify my gratitude for them. My books, which I consulted, have shown me that fate destines thee to love a certain princess; but there were difficulties in the way of thy happiness, which, without some powerful aid, would have proved very hard for thee to surmount. I am come, therefore, to offer thee my services; thy beloved one is under persecution from the fairy Fanfreluche, because she cannot resolve to marry a certain dwarf, nephew to that fairy, and who, on account of his complexion is named the Green Dwarf, or the Knight of the Wasp, from the animal on which he is commonly seen to ride. The princess, being immovable in her sentiments, was not long since changed by this cruel fairy into a blue butterfly edged with purple, under a condition that the enchantment shall not cease till in her present state she have found a lover who will pluck off her head and her wings. And oh! hapless Don Sylvio! the blue butterfly caught by thee this morning was thy princess! She saw thee in the grove, and instantly she loved thee. She fled from thee only to see if thou wouldst follow her, and suffered thee, of her own accord, to take her the moment she was convinced of her not being indifferent to thee, even in the shape of a butterfly. On finding herself in thy hand, she strove by her fluttering to tell thee how agreeable she felt her prison; but the cruel Fanfreluche had deprived her of speech, so that she could only heave a sigh, which thou didst unhappily mistake as a mark of her regret for the loss of liberty. Thy compassionate heart therefore incited thee to let her fly; she did so, with the extremest sorrow; and in all probability would presently have returned toward



thee, had she not at that instant perceived the Green Dwarf, mounted on his wasp, who put on such a look of terror, that fear made the princess wish for every wing in creation to add all possible speed to her precipitate retreat. Fortunately for the princess, I was just set out in search of thee. I saw the danger she was in, and flew to her succour, after having commissioned one of my salamanders to throw the princess's portrait in the path before you. I pursued the Green Dwarf, who, finding himself too feeble to enter the lists with me, assumed every possible shape in order to escape me. At length he transformed himself into a thin cloud, but I soon perceived the change, and pressed it so hard that it presently dissolved. The labourers at work in the fields beneath us fancied they saw it rain blood, and took it for an evil omen. The Green Dwarf, unable to endure the pressure, at length resumed his own shape; which, however, I suffered him not long to enjoy, transforming him into an ivory tooth-pick, on condition never to regain his native form, till he should have served to pick the hindermost cheek-tooth of some female of fourscore, that was still a maiden.'"

"Oh, merciful to me!" cried Pedrillo on hearing this; "I am the fairy Rademante's most humble servant, but I cannot think she knew what she talked about. At this rate, the poor Green Dwarf will remain a tooth-pick for ever: for, look ye, Signior Don Sylvio, I will consent to be no longer Pedrillo if you find either in the Old or New World a virgin of fourscore that has any teeth left to pick; or a female of fourscore with all her teeth, that is still a maid."

"That," replied Don Sylvio, "will be the Green Dwarf's concern; at least, I shall have nothing to fear from him during the long period of his search after this phœnix. But, prithee, sir, have not I repeatedly ordered you not to interrupt me, on pain of my indignation?—take care then, how you oblige me to tell you so the third time!"

"Very well, sir," answered Pedrillo, "go on with your discourse, and don't be angry with me; I won't open my lips again; you know I am not fond of chattering, but when you talk of tooth-picks, and maids of fourscore——"

"Plague take the prating fellow!" cried Don Sylvio; "what, are you beginning again?——"

"Oh, sir, pray forgive me," said Pedrillo, "I promise you I will never interrupt you any more, nor should I have done it now, if it had not been for the tooth-pick——"

"Would thou wert a tooth-pick thyself," exclaimed the Don, in high indignation. "Hear what I tell ye, and be silent, or else, by all that's good, this is the last time I'll ever speak to you."

This terrible menace struck poor Pedrillo all in a heap; for he had the utmost love for his young master. He therefore put his hand upon his mouth to show he was determined to be silent; and Don Sylvio continued his narration as follows:—

"The fairy having ended her discourse, made a short pause; I seized that moment, to throw myself at her feet and to testify my gratitude in the most lively terms. 'Powerful fairy,' said I, 'who hast already done for me so much, oh pursue, I conjure thee, the generous design, and give it full perfection. Thou who wast able to give a Green Dwarf the shape of a tooth-pick, how easy will it be for thee to restore my dear princess to her native form!'"

"'It is not in my power,' replied the fairy, 'to dissolve an enchantment wrought by one of my companions. This great adventure is reserved for thee. Lose no time, Don Sylvio! Take with thee thy faithful Pedrillo, and the little Pimpimp, and till thou hast found her, never quit thy search for the blue butterfly. I am not a little apprehensive that the malicious Fanfreluche will study to avenge her nephew; but let not these difficulties daunt thy

resolution. On the contrary, be assured, that whenever thou findest thyself in distress, my succour shall not be implored in vain.'

"At these words, the fairy, her chariot, and the salamanders disappeared, while I, finding myself greatly fatigued, fell into that profound slumber, out of which I don't think I should have waked till this time, had not you come to rouse me.

"Thus then, Pedrillo, you have heard what the fairy hath enjoined me. I have no time to lose. We must instantly bestir ourselves in search of my dear princess; and I trust you will not refuse to follow me."

CHAPTER XI

DIALOGUE BETWEEN PEDRILLO AND HIS MASTER. PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTENDED JOURNEY

PEDRILLO had listened with great pleasure to this history of the fairy, the princess, and the Green Dwarf, for he was a great lover of such marvellous tales and stories. But the moment he understood that Don Sylvio was setting out in earnest, and must run all the world over in search of the blue butterfly, this part of the business did not at all suit his taste; he grated his teeth, shrugged up his shoulders, and, after a hesitation of some minutes, at length he cried—

"Merciful to me! Signior Don Sylvio, what would you have me say to you? If I understand matters right, you may just as well have been dreaming this as anything else; and if I did not know you were so good a gentleman, Heaven forgive me, but one would be almost tempted to believe——"

"How, sir!" said Don Sylvio, "have you the face then to doubt the truth of what I tell you."

"No, indeed," replied Pedrillo, "I have no doubt of it at all; but the globe of fire, and the frog fairy, and the Green Dwarf in love with the princess, and the butterfly too, which is to be your wife, and turned by you into a princess, and the tooth-pick——. Don't be angry, dear sir, but, upon my word, d'ye see, I do think you must have dreamed about all this; and one very often has droll dreams: for example, I myself dreamed but a little while ago——"

"Oh, good heavens!" cried Don Sylvio, losing all

patience; "am I to do nothing else but hear your dreams? And do you suppose that my seeing the fairy Radiante, and her informing me of all I had to do for regaining my incomparable princess—tell me, blockhead, do you suppose all this to be a dream? and do you suppose this picture here at my neck too to be all a dream?" Saying this, he took the trinket, pressed the spring, and showed Pedrillo the little picture that lay concealed under the great diamond.

Pedrillo stared very earnestly on seeing the portrait of a woman who appeared to him a thousand times handsomer than Mrs Beatrice herself. "Ah! by Saint James," cried he, "I have now no more to say. What, then, this is the princess that fairy Radiante has promised you, and who is transformed into a blue butterfly? I must be an oaf indeed now, not to believe everything you have been telling me; though, on my conscience, I never could have believed it, had I not seen it with my own eyes. Well, this is wonderful! for who but a fairy could have done all this for you? Why, I'll lay any wager that the least of these precious stones is worth ten of our cottages. And then I have often read, how that such pieces of furniture were nothing but trifles to a fairy; diamonds with them are as common a merchandise as pebble-stones are among us; and I am pretty well persuaded that Madam Rademante has finer jewels about her chamber-pot than there are in our queen's necklace, whom God preserve! Well, well, these are not things to be found in one's sleep. You must therefore have been awake, and, if you were awake, you could not have dreamed, as I said just now; and so, as that's the case, the princess must certainly be a butterfly. Do, sir, let me see it again. Bless my heart, how pretty it is! what a sweet look is that! Why, if one did not know 'twas only a painting, one would think she was going to open her mouth and talk. Oh, the devil take those

cursed creatures that could be so unmerciful as to change this charming little face into an insect. Indeed, Sir Knight of the Wasp, 'tis well for you and all such folks, that princesses like these are to be met with: but a plague take ye! can you have the front to imagine that, because she is so small that one may cover her whole pretty little face with a gnat's wing, therefore she must be made for such a pitiful, bandy-legged, hunchbacked, diminutive green monster as you?"

"What a stupid thing you are!" said Don Sylvio. "And do you imagine that the princess is no bigger than you see this little portrait? You must know that the reason of representing her so small, is merely because the bit of ivory could not be any larger to suit the case. But this does not hinder but she may be full as tall as the goddess Diana, or the beautiful Alia, who certainly must have been none of the least, since a giant so big as Molandino absolutely fixed upon her for a wife; and even supposing her to be not quite so tall, she would only be so much more like the Graces, who are represented by the poets and painters smaller than the other goddesses, thereby to express in a more striking manner those attractions and that sweetness which render them worthy the honour of being companions and attendants to the Queen of Love."

"True, sir," answered Pedrillo, "nothing can be more just; for, as the proverb says, 'Whatever is little is pretty'; and though madam the princess were no bigger than a wax doll, yet, I daresay, upon seeing her, we shall find it the drollest little creature that a man should behold in a summer's day."

"Pedrillo, my friend," interrupted Don Sylvio, "let us not lose time in frivolous discourse, while, perhaps, my mistress is in danger."

"Ay, very true, sir," said the facetious Pedrillo, "that's just what I was going to say: for, surely, nothing can be more disagreeable to so fine a

princess than to see herself every moment exposed to the hazard of being devoured by some cursed crow or other. Mercy on me! 'twould as soon snap her up as the commonest insect without any regard to her princely rank, which I really begin to be persuaded of, now that I have seen her picture."

"What thou hast said, Pedrillo," replied Don Sylvio, "gives me no uneasiness at all. With regard to all such apprehensions I rest the matter entirely in the protection of the fairy Radiante. But, mighty as this protection may be against all the crows upon earth, it is not enough to screen her from the subtle practices of that wicked fairy Fanfreluche; for, as I told thee before, it is for me only that the disenchantment of the blue butterfly is reserved. What sayst thou, Pedrillo? Would it not be better for us to set off immediately, while my aunt is from home? Thou seest we are all here together; thou, I, and Pimpimp: let us then go seek the princess, though it were to the Antipodes. The fairy will take care of the rest."

"You are in a very great hurry, sir," said Pedrillo; "but I am inclined to think you don't rightly calculate matters. You must know that in travelling there is occasion for a thousand things, which one ought to be provided with in case of necessity."

"And you must know, too, sir," interrupted Don Sylvio, "that I think you don't know what you are talking about. Where did you ever hear or read of any prince or knight that used such a precaution, while he was travelling through the world under the protection of a fairy? Such persons never want for rich habits, fine linen, or money for all necessary occasions. They commonly pass the night in enchanted palaces, where they are magnificently regaled; and should they happen to wander in forests or deserts, there, without the least thought or care in the world, they behold a table set out before them, served up by invisible hands, and

loaded with the most delicious viands; after which refreshment they lie down and sleep on a bed of flowers, either in grottos or in arbours planted by the hands of nymphs, and clad in the richest verdure."

"All this, sir," said Pedrillo, "is charming and delightful; but, to tell you the truth, I should still be of the opinion not to trust too much to these fine things. Among the fairies, you know, one has both friends and enemies; and they would not be the first princes or princesses I have read of, who, upon such adventures, with the finest teeth in the world, had nothing to nibble. Too much precaution never does harm. As my good old grandmother used to say: One bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. In a word, sir, if you do not disdain my advice, I will go and make a provision of linen, a good bit of something eatable, and a few bottles of wine: and do you, sir, on your part, take care to have your purse well lined with reals. This done, we will take whatever road you please; only heaven grant we may neither meet with blue nor green dwarfs, who might take it in their heads perhaps to dispute our princess with us."

Don Sylvio, who, setting aside his wild notions, was one of the best youths in the world, suffered himself to be easily persuaded by Pedrillo, and accordingly returned with him to the castle, first clapping the picture of his supposed princess into his pocket, that he might not raise the curiosity of the servants. With all the confidence that our hero reposed in the succour of the fairies, he failed not, however, to take off with him a few trinkets which he had inherited from his father; as also his little hoard of money, which, to say the truth, did not amount to above ten or a dozen ducats; while Pedrillo, on his part, ransacked the kitchen and cellar. The above-mentioned sum, though rather of the least, seemed, notwithstanding, to our hero,

more than sufficient for a journey from one hemisphere to the other under the protection of the fairy Radiante. He then put on his handsomest laced shirt, dressed himself in a doublet of green satin edged with gold and lined with pink taffety; and his breeches, stockings, and the feather in his hat were of the same colour. Thus equipped, and equalling of figure all the Narcissuses and Hyacinths of poetic story, Don Sylvio waited with impatience for the companion of his travels, firmly resolved to steal off privately before his aunt should return home.

CHAPTER XII

THE AUTHOR'S REFLECTIONS

HAD it been in our power to write this history half a dozen centuries ago, the whole chapter before us would have been superfluous. In former times, that which we call the marvellous was so common, that people could not meet with anything more extraordinary than natural events. But in the present age, one would almost suppose that a mode of thinking diametrically opposite had taken the lead: insomuch, that perhaps, out of all the readers of this history, we can hardly flatter ourselves with finding one who would readily be persuaded to think that everything related in the foregoing chapter might have happened every day. Since the invention of microscopes, invisible things have but little influence on human minds; and even a ghost himself would find it very difficult to persuade people of the reality of his existence. In short, it would be in vain for us to pretend (since nobody would believe it if we did) that there exists such a fairy as Radiante, or that the blue butterfly has ever been a princess, or that a tooth-pick ever yet figured away in the character of a green dwarf.

Our best way then, in such circumstances, is candidly to confess that we ourselves have as little faith in all that Don Sylvio has been telling Pedrillo, as we have in the visions of our pious countrywoman, Mary d'Agreda, or the tale of the Red Cap, or any other tale with which our good nurses formerly fed us from the very cradle.

That truth, however, which we profess throughout the whole course of this history, obliges us to observe that Don Sylvio in his narrations has neither advanced nor asserted anything which may not, in a certain sense, be as true and real as most other stories drawn from the imaginary world.

To understand this seeming paradox, we must remember that there are two sorts of realities, which, *in concreto*, are not so easily distinguishable as, perhaps, some may imagine.

Now, as in spite of all the egotists in the world, there are things which really exist out of ourselves, so are there, in return, others which exist only in our imagination. The former exist, though we do not know that they exist; the latter exist only so far as we imagine them to exist. These things have no reality in themselves, but with him who takes them for real they have the same effect as if they were so; and without depriving men, by this means, of a good share of that high opinion they entertain of themselves, we may assert that these matters are the mainsprings of most of the actions of mankind, that they are the fountain either of our happiness or of our misery, the source of our most detestable vices or of our most shining virtues.

What fairy or enchanted palace can be more chimerical than that glorious renown which the greatest men agree to have been the aim of their most splendid enterprises? Did not Alexander, the great Alexander, who realised that fabulous march of Bacchus into India, and thereby plunged himself in a thousand dangers, to furnish others with matter for conversation—did not he pursue a chimera as unreal as that which made Don Sylvio run after a blue butterfly in order to disenchant it? To any spectator, who coolly considers the actions of men, the former must appear as great a madman as the latter; at least the latter hath this advantage

over the other, that his chimera injured no one, while that of Asia's conqueror laid waste half the world.

But it is time for us to recollect that we are entering upon reflections very remote from our subject; so remote, indeed, that we are not a little embarrassed to find out a happier transition than those commonly adopted by gentlemen compilers, when, after half a dozen digressions, they want to return to the place from whence they came.

To resume then our subject. In the narrative of our young knight, we must be careful to distinguish between what happened to him in reality and what his imagination added to it. The reader may remember, after the adventure of the butterfly and portrait, we left him in a condition wherein his imagination was elevated in an extraordinary manner. The vivacity of the ideas which presented themselves to him was so much the more increased by night as those ideas themselves were less weakened by any external sensation; they only wanted one more degree to make them felt, as if they were real. In such a disposition of mind it was that Don Sylvio perceived a globe of fire, which rolled about in the air, and shortly after burst close by him. This known meteor, which a good naturalist would have regarded with a curious eye, finished the enchantment of a Don Sylvio. He recollected to have often, in his tales, met with such globes of fire, from whence there always issued a fairy seated on a diamond car drawn by six swans, or by four and twenty rams with fleeces of gold. This appearance then, otherwise very natural, was, according to his mode of reasoning, the beginning of a supernatural apparition; and nothing more was wanting to change his chimeras, which were already formed in his brain, and ready to burst forth into a series of realities; since it had no other difference from a dream than that Don Sylvio was awake, and had been so much

the more powerfully deceived by the connection between his prior and subsequent ideas.

This, so far as we understand the matter, is the most probable explication that can be given of such visions; we are very far, however, from wishing to force any one to subscribe to our sentiments. Don Sylvio was alone, when he pretended that the fairy had appeared to him; and we may boldly defy all the sceptics, materialists, deists, and pantheists in the world to prove that the fairy Radiante, or her apparition, was anything impossible. We offer our explication only as a bare conjecture; and if the lovers of the marvellous should be more disposed to believe it than Don Sylvio himself (who undoubtedly was an eye-witness of the whole affair, and, which is more, cannot be suspected of premeditated imposture), in this case we have nothing to reply against them.

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

A DEMONSTRATION THAT PRUDERY MAY EXCITE THE DISPLEASURE OF VENUS

WHILE Don Sylvio was getting matters ready to go in search of adventures, Donna Menzia endeavoured to detain him in a way which Don Sylvio as little suspected as Donna Menzia suspected Don Sylvio's intrigue with an enchanted butterfly.

We think it has been already observed that this lady had, for some time past, made frequent visits to a small town in the neighbourhood; visits, indeed, that gave little concern to Don Sylvio's curiosity, but which, in fact, tended to no less than playing him a viler turn than all the united malice of all the Fanfreluches and all the Carabossas in the world could have invented against him.

The reader may, perhaps, remember that Donna Menzia, notwithstanding her extreme prudery, had been no enemy to love in her tender youth; nay, and to speak the truth ingenuously, there never perhaps was a woman to whom that virtue, which the cruelty of men obliged her to retain, had been more irksome. It is even pretended that from the time of her first renouncing the world to live in retirement, which, generally speaking, is said to be no way favourable to forced prudery—it is, I say, pretended that this irksomeness of situation had been more than once so pressing, that (without the least offence to her sex be it spoken) she had even made some

advances to one of the grooms in the family; advances which could not have failed to produce their effect, had not the charms of young Maritornes rendered this clownish lover insensible to all the advantages of a skeleton of quality over a young female peasant. Whatever ground there might be for this anecdote, it is certain that Donna Menzia was so far unhappy as to be obliged to seek in the vague illusions of a heated imagination the shadow of a pleasure which her want of experience estimated in proportion to the ardour of her desires. Her aversion to Boccace's tales, and even to the innocent pleasantries of Lopez de Vega, did not prevent those dialogues which some modern Sotades has placed to the account of the famous Aloysia Sigea, from being her favourite book; in short, it was constantly under her bolster—a custom which, perhaps, she thought justified by the example of Saint Chrysostom, who did the same honour to the comedies of Aristophanes.

It may possibly be thought an indecorum that by revealing these secrets we have annihilated the benefits which the world might have derived from the edifying example of the chaste Donna Menzia. But in this instance it was indispensably necessary to discharge the duties of a faithful historian; especially as an ill-timed discretion might have rendered the truth of our history suspected with regard to some matters, which we shall be obliged to relate presently.

Not to keep our readers any longer in painful suspense, we must inform them it is but too true that neither the virtue of Donna Menzia, nor the pride of her birth, nor the threescore springs which she had already passed, were able to defend her tender heart against the love wherewith a certain attorney of Xelva had the good fortune to inspire her.

She had become acquainted with him at a lady's, a friend of hers. The attorney managed that lady's

affairs, and often came to visit her. Donna Menzia had, therefore, an opportunity of being thoroughly informed of the attorney's circumstances in life, which appeared to be very favourable to the design she had formed upon his person from the first moment she saw him.

This worthy personage was named Rodrigo Sanchez; a man who, setting aside his talents for chicanery, was more remarkable for his personal advantages than for the qualities of his mind. He was a square-built man, of a middling stature, with broad shoulders, hair that naturally curled, little sparkling eyes overshadowed with large black eyebrows, a large aquiline nose, and limbs that in case of need might have supported an Atlas.

We cannot positively say whether these sort of figures are, in general, so dangerous for professed prudes as some pretend. This is certain, that Mr Rodrigo was an Adonis in the eyes of Donna Menzia, and had the honour, at their first interview, of conquering that aversion for marriage which she was known to have always entertained; nay, he had merit sufficient to excite in that illustrious lady a desire of bearing with him the yoke of Hymen, though the man was only forty years of age, and, to mend the matter, an understrapper in his profession.

If the eyes of this new Adonis were not grateful enough to find a Venus in the person of Donna Menzia, yet the idea of such a marriage was as powerful a motive with a man of his stamp as the charms of a person commonly are with lovers of a more refined composition.

Ever since the death of his elder brother, who was a jeweller, he had been guardian to his niece, named Mergelina, who, from the time of her parent's decease, possessed a fortune of 100,000 ducats. As indifferent as his niece was in point of person, so much tenderness had our attorney for her ducats, and for a long time past had he ruminated in vain, and turned

about in his head a project of making himself legally master of that sum, or, at least, a good part of it; when lo! the passion which he had the happiness to enkindle in Donna Menzia seemed to give him a favourable opportunity for succeeding to his wishes. His niece, who undoubtedly enjoyed a very pretty fortune, had already refused some pretenders on account of their mean extraction; for she had taken it into her head, once for all, either to be a woman of quality or to die a maid. Mr Rodrigo, therefore, entertained not the least doubt of bringing her to whatever he wanted, provided he could but marry her to a hidalgo; * but the grand point was, where to find one who would be as complaisant as Mr Rodrigo required. The advice given him by Donna Menzia's female friend led him to hope that no person could be more suited to his purpose than Don Sylvio, who had been represented to him as a young gentleman, very generous, but without any experience or the least knowledge of the world; and who had, moreover, accustomed himself to be governed by his aunt in everything. He resolved, therefore, to try his fortune, and derive every possible advantage from the amorous fit of old Donna Menzia. In truth, he played the part of a tender swain as ridiculously as could be; however, he displayed vivacity enough to persuade so sensible a lady that he was the most amorous man in the world.

No sooner was Donna Menzia assured of her conquest, than she began to recollect what she owed to her virtue and to her rank; accordingly, she played off so many airs, that the attorney, who was extremely deficient in the art of securing prudes, would have lost all patience a hundred times, had he not been held in by a force superior to the charms of his cruel fair one. His grand consolation was that the lady found it exceedingly difficult to conceal the chaste flames which preyed upon her; insomuch, that she

* The Spanish term for a gentleman.

thought proper to shorten ceremonies so much the more, as she had no reason to doubt the excess of her lover's passion. She therefore, at length, consented to make him happy, and a double marriage was agreed on between the uncle and aunt, the nephew and the niece; upon which the attorney drew up a contract, wherein the interests of the two former were not forgotten.

Donna Menzia had brought up her nephew too well to look for any contradiction on his part; but yet the idea that this twofold alliance would derogate from the nobility of the family with which she had always been highly infatuated, gave her some degree of pain. For though the shining merit of Mr Rodrigo seemed well to justify the vehemence of her passion, it would have cost her very much to sacrifice herself to such considerations, had not the gentleman (who was a great genealogist) led her to hope that he would soon show her a pedigree that should prove the family of Rodrigo Sanchez to have derived its origin, and to have descended in a right line, from a natural son of Sanchez the Great, King of Castile.

CHAPTER II

A PICTURE IN THE STYLE OF CALOT

DON SYLVIO, who had nothing in his head but butterflies and green dwarfs, never so much as dreamt it possible that his dear aunt could think of marrying him to a plebeian of Xelva, while all his attention was engaged how to deliver his winged princess—not to say that the plebeian in question was one of the most homely beings that ever man espoused.

Great was his surprise, therefore, when, before Pedrillo had finished his preparations for their journey, he saw his aunt arrive, accompanied by a lady and gentleman entirely unknown to Don Sylvio. Still more was his astonishment increased, when he considered these strange figures more closely; in particular, he was struck in so extraordinary a manner with the young lady, that he took her at first for a monkey in woman's clothes. Pedrillo, who assisted them to alight from the carriage, had the utmost difficulty to refrain from laughing when he beheld them; and Don Sylvio, perfectly polite as he was in other respects, retreated a few steps backward greatly ruffled, and without observing what a sweet satisfaction diffused itself over the charming visage of the diminutive monster, the moment she had examined him.

In short, if Donna Menzia had wished to have a niece that should not eclipse her own charms, she could have pitched upon no properer person than this same Donna Mergelina.

We will just attempt a sketch, and see if it be

possible to convey any idea of the subject to our reader's imagination.

She was, then, exactly four feet four inches high, and as many broad, reckoning from one shoulder to the other; the whole so regularly constructed that her head made nearly a fourth part of her entire height. Her neck, breast, and the residue of her body were lost so insensibly the one in the other, that it was impossible to distinguish where one began or the other ended. Notwithstanding the enormous length of her chin, her face, however, formed a very regular square, for her forehead was exactly as much too low as her chin was too long. Her eyes were so round, and stood so far out of her head, that the nickname which Homer has given Juno seems to have been expressly created for Donna Mergelina.* Her mouth was of so capacious a size, that without a shadow of fear you might have introduced Prince Tanzai's skimmer into it without touching her large teeth; and if ever a poet had thought of making her lips the seat of the Graces, it must be owned the goddesses would have found room and a couch there to have enjoyed their pastimes with some of the young gods of love. Her nose, indeed, was a little too small, for it was difficult to discover it between her fat hanging-down cheeks, which were something high in bone; however, you must be obliged to let it pass for a nose, on account of the nostrils that stared out before it. This, by the way, was the only thing in which nature had shown itself niggardly in her person; but, in return, she had a back of so considerable a height that nothing could be added to it. Her ears were tolerably long, and her hands and feet so large that she might have lived like an amphibious being either on land or water. But that which, in her idea, was sufficient to efface all the above-mentioned charms, was a neck and bosom; but such a neck and bosom as you shall hardly see, especially in Spain; it being

* γλαυκῶπις, *ox-eyed*. *Il.* i. lin. 551 *et al.*

indeed very white, but of so immense a bulk, that if one had wished to make a statue of Venus Callipygos,* it would have served as a model for a very opposite part of the body. She prided herself so much in this species of perfection as to display it with a prodigality which rigid moralists might perhaps have treated as scandalous, even had it been less disgusting.

As to the colourings which nature had employed to ornament such a masterpiece, they were, in truth, arranged in so wonderful a manner as must have puzzled a Vandyke. Her hair was neither white like that of Ceres, nor brown like that of Venus, nor of a brilliant yellow like that of the "Lass with the Golden Locks"; but it was of a fiery red, naturally so short, and so bristly, that it must have tired the patience of a Cypassis.† Her eyes were of a fine light grey; her forehead and cheeks of an olive colour, heightened by a beautiful brownish-red where it was wanted; her mouth (if you will be kind enough to allow the expression a second time) bordered a little upon the colour of the Aigue-Marine,‡ and lost nothing of its agreeableness by the black hue of her broad, ill-arranged teeth. Lastly, her arms and hands were of so natural a leather colour, that she might easily have spared herself the expense which other ladies put themselves to for chicken-skin gloves.

All this, which undoubtedly composed such a kind of figure as one seldom meets with anywhere but over a chimney-piece, was set off by decorations that gave a high idea of the fair Mergelina's good taste; insomuch that you had only to look at it to admire in her that fine harmony of body and mind which, according to Pythagoras's principles, constitutes

* That is, "The white-armed." (This is not correct: Venus Callipygos means, of course, Venus with the beautiful πυγή.)

† "Ponendis in mille modis perfecta capillos,
Comere sed solas digna, Cypassi, deas."—OVID.

‡ A sort of precious stone of the sea-water colour.

perfect beauty. She wore a deep yellow satin petticoat embroidered with silver; her bodice was of green taffety tied with pale blue ribands; she had a flame-coloured aigrette, crimson slippers worked with gold, and pink stockings with silver clocks.

No sooner had this amiable person, with the assistance of Don Sylvio, gained the little parlour in which Donna Menzia commonly received her visits, than the first thing she did was to run to the glass to repair, as she observed, the disorder which the journey had occasioned in her dress. This done, she took her seat, and while they waited the coming of Mrs Beatrice with some refreshments, each member of the little society seemed under an embarrassment what was to be done with its own proper person, and those of the company. Donna Mergelina either played with her fan, or eyed herself in the looking-glass which hung opposite where she sat. Mr Rodrigo one while contemplated the amiable and juvenile Donna Menzia, then looked down at his legs. Don Sylvio stared about him, and seemed in a total confusion; while his good aunt was continually opening her mouth, without knowing what to say.

Mr Rodrigo was just going to observe that it was fine weather, when in came the serviceable Mrs Beatrice to animate the conversation with a basket of green, dry, and candied fruits. The whole company felt it a very seasonable consolation. Donna Mergelina displayed, upon this occasion, the good education she had received, and declared, with many grimaces and congees, that she was quite sorry to think of the pains which had been kindly taken with her. These compliments and distortions of face were answered by the obliging Donna Menzia with as many compliments and as many distortions. A further observation was made that the strawberries were very large, and the cherries of a delicious flavour; while the nuts and preserved peaches met with very great applause. This furnished Donna Menzia with

the subject of a very learned dissertation upon the art of making preserves, which so heartily tired out the attorney, that he did all he could to turn the conversation; in short, he burned with impatience to enter upon the relation of a suit then under his management, and the moment he could cleverly bring it in, the ladies were accordingly entertained in the most gallant manner imaginable.

CHAPTER III

DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE AUNT AND THE NEPHEW

MRS BEATRICE soon returned to the parlour with all sorts of wines and other liquors; and while, upon a signal from her mistress, she entertained the guests with her lively chat, Donna Menzia retired into another room with her nephew, in order to explain to him the occasion of their visit.

As her first salutation, "Don Sylvio," said she, "I see you are dressed very fine to-day; pray, did you know I should bring you such agreeable company?"

"No, aunt," replied Don Sylvio, blushing and hesitating. "But—I don't know—I thought——"

"There's no need of apologies, Don Sylvio," said his aunt. "You could not have set yourself off more opportunely; I could almost attribute it to a kind of foresight."

So saying, she sat down, blew her nose, spat several times, and at length, after a few preambles, and not without blushing, discovered to him her twofold design of marrying him to the amiable Mergelina, and of yielding the right of property in her own fair person to the worthy gentleman, Rodrigo Sanchez. She did not fail to enlarge with Don Sylvio upon the great advantages that would accrue to him from this alliance, and gave it as her opinion that he owed her a particular obligation for the great care she had taken of his patrimony.

Don Sylvio, however, was very far from being so pliant and grateful as his aunt had imagined. The

astonishment which had seized him from the beginning of this discourse changed at length into an indignation which he had much ado to contain. He did this violence to himself notwithstanding, and, after a pretty long pause, told his dear aunt, though with less appearance of wonder than of anger: "I protest to you, aunt, I have no conception of all you have been saying. I am hardly eighteen years of age; my birth, and the education you have given me, require me shortly to quit this idle rustic kind of life and seek a suitable fortune through a series of adventures. It is you yourself, madam, who have inspired me with these sentiments; and now, all on a sudden, you want me to marry a petty citizen of Xelva — a woman whose deformity and personal defects might well stagger the greediest fortune-hunter upon earth; * not to mention that I must be obliged to confine myself for my whole life in this miserable village, to hide from every eye my misery and shame."

"Nephew," cried Donna Menzia, "you forget the respect which you owe me; and, I confess, I had expected more obedience——"

"Obedience from me?" interrupted Don Sylvio briskly, "when you want to chain me to a monster that would make me despise the greatest dangers, were it only to avoid the sight of her!"

"Why, truly," replied Donna Menzia, with a sneer, "we all know you have a high idea of your beauty, but we won't dispute upon that head. Donna Mergelina by no means deserves the contempt you are pleased to express: she is an amiable young creature; and even if she were less so, the offer of a hundred thousand ducats is not a matter for a poor country gentleman, with hardly an income of a hundred pistoles, to reject with so much haughtiness."

"Madam," replied Don Sylvio, with a little more composure, "you have not been long used to estimate

* In the original, *Den geldgierigsten Harpax.*

the worth of a gentleman by his income; and if a hundred thousand ducats have not been able so to fascinate my eyes as to make me think the person amiable whom you call Donna Mergelina, let me add, that, excepting Heaven, to which I owe my heart, such as it is, no person in the world but Donna Menzia hath taught me to despise riches when they are to be gained by meannesses."

"And pray, sir," said Donna Menzia, "in what can those meannesses consist, if you marry Donna Mergelina? Though her ancestors, through misfortunes, may have been obliged to conceal their origin, which, perhaps, is full as illustrious as any in the kingdom — I know what I say, Don Sylvio — yet fortune, which has since been more propitious, hath enabled them to raise their own family, and restore that splendour to ours, which its disgraceful indigence has almost effaced."

"Madam," replied Don Sylvio, his countenance glowing with indignation, "that indigence is never disgraceful which is not brought upon us by our own fault. Leave it to me, if you please, to restore honour to my name; I am conscious of sufficient courage to face that ill-fortune which may now seem to condemn it to obscurity. Let Donna Mergelina be noble, if you will have it so; but, for my own part, I assure you, that if she were even descended from the Grand Cid, and brought me in marriage all the mines of Peru, I would still have nothing to say to her."

"How!" cried Donna Menzia, in a tone that might better have been employed with a boy of twelve years old, "and so you will not marry her? But, sir, give me leave to tell you that you shall marry her, or you shall soon see whether Donna Menzia knows how to preserve that authority which nature, and the will of your father, have given me over you. You *shall* marry her, I say, or——"

"None of your vain threatenings, madam!" interrupted Don Sylvio, with an air and firmness that

a little confounded the old lady. "I know the whole extent of my duties to you; but I know equally well the limits of your assumed authority. Go and marry your good man, Rodrigo Sanchez—I shall never think of troubling my head about it; but, at the age I am, permit me to refuse an engagement which by no means suits my inclinations."

At these words the old lady fired with rage and fury. "I hear you," cried she, grinding the few old rotten teeth which, like ancient monuments, stuck here and there out of her wide mouth, "and I can see all that secret malice of reproach which you wish to cast upon me; but, sir, I despise you, and all that you can say of me. What! shall a boy of your age know better than I, what is, or is not suitable? But, indeed, I am a fool to be thus angry. If your understanding is not sound enough to acknowledge the value of those pains which I have taken for your interest, at least I will not suffer your levity to make you forego a fortune which far exceeds all that you could ever hope for. You are beginning very early to shake off the yoke which it rests with me either to alleviate or to increase, as I shall find necessary. For, in one word, Mr Nephew, you are dependent upon me, and I know how to make myself obeyed."

"Madam," said Don Sylvio, full of choler, "your conduct is a sufficient proof that grey hairs are not always the surest indications of wisdom. Know then, madam, that I am neither old enough, nor yet so young, as to become a sacrifice to your ridiculous passion. I exempt you from every duty which the care of my fortune may impose upon you; and if I refuse your hideous Mergelina with her hundred thousand ducats, by which she may think to bribe me, you may believe, madam, that I have good reasons for so doing—for I too know what I say, Donna Menzia—and be assured that under the protection which I enjoy, I can despise, in my turn, all the menaces

wherewith you think to intimidate me, just as though I were still a little boy."

So saying, he hurried out of the room into the garden, where he trudged about at a great rate, foaming with rage, and waiting impatiently the coming of his faithful Pedrillo.

CHAPTER IV

DON SYLVIO'S CONJECTURES. HE CONSULTS PEDRILLO ABOUT HIS ESCAPE

PEDRILLO, who, it must be confessed, was full as curious as talkative, had listened behind the door and overheard all that passed between his master and Donna Menzia: accordingly, on seeing the former run into the garden in such high indignation, he followed him very softly, and met him in a grove of chestnut trees walking in a great hurry, with his hands clenched together behind his back, and talking very loud to himself. In short, there was something in his air so wild that Pedrillo had not courage to accost him. Don Sylvio, however, the moment he perceived him, called to him, and said: "I see thou art afraid of my reproaches; for if thy superfluous precautions had not retarded us, we should have been far enough off this cursed house, from whence now, I fear, we shall not be able to escape without the assistance of the powerful fairy Radiante. But don't be frightened, my friend; I know thou hadst the best intentions in the world, and I am not so unjust as to put these unlucky events to thy account which are only the effect, either of my evil destiny, or of the malice of enchanters, my enemies."

So saying, he took him by the hand and led him into a thicket, where, after having ordered him to look about on all sides to see if they were alone, he said to him in a low voice: "Listen, Pedrillo, I am going to discover to thee my most secret thoughts. I am fully persuaded that that old skeleton of a woman whom you saw alight from the coach with the two other monsters is not my aunt, Donna Menzia;

though at first sight I was dupe enough to take it for her. It is certainly the wicked Fanfreluche, who has borrowed her shape, the more readily to frustrate those plans which the beneficent fairy Radiante has laid for my happiness. She has given me certain tokens, which leaves me no room to doubt on this head; neither can I doubt it, for this pretended Donna Menzia, in spite of her disguise, showed me something so terrible in her eyes while I talked with her, that I have never seen anything like it in those of my aunt. In short, for I cannot now enter into particulars, I have no longer any doubt upon this matter. Fanfreluche must have heard of the transformation of the Green Dwarf; and, in order to prevent me from disenchanting the blue butterfly, under the aid of the powerful Radiante, she is come here in the form of Donna Menzia to force me into marriage—such a marriage as I should detest, even though the object they would have me espouse were as beautiful as this is hideous."

"And do you think so, sir?" replied Pedrillo, who had listened to his master with great attention. "To say the truth, I myself almost believe you may be right, for I observed the moment they got out of the coach that all was not natural; and now that you have communicated to me your ideas, I could venture, sir, to lay any wager that this Donna Smergelina (or what do you call her?) is the Green Dwarf's sister, or something worse. God help us, for, in my conscience, I never in my life saw anything so ugly. I am sorry we did not, at first, look more narrowly to her feet; but one thing I am sure I saw, and that is, that her countenance and body were very much tinged over with green; and then, she had a humpback too, and terrible long ears."

"And yet, with all these beauties," said Don Sylvio, "she asks no less than for me to marry her!"

"You marry her?" cried Pedrillo, "marry her? You! What! You marry such a homely puss as

she? Surely you must have lost your senses (pardon me, sir, for saying so): but I am satisfied you'll never do any such thing. What a devil would the monster be at? Indeed, sir, it would be a very great pity for such a handsome young gentleman as you to be seen in the arms of a frightful sea-calf like that. No, no, Madam Smergelina, that will never do, by my troth! Troop off, prithee, or, if you will absolutely be married, take the dwarf Migonnet; he suits you far better. Ha! ha! 'twould be a mighty good match. While he was adorning his nose with a half-dozen linnets and goldfinches, as the stories go she might set off her enormous bosom with as many young porpoises laid tumbling at full length. 'Twould be a high scene. Deuce take it!—ay, well, well! So, then, we are to see these copper-faces soon married, are not we? They tell me, indeed, that she is prodigiously rich; but were she even gilt all over from head to foot, I would not have her, though I am only a poor country lad. Less money and more beauty, if you please, Madam Fanfreluche, or else go look out for your husbands elsewhere."

This strange rhapsody which Pedrillo poured forth with much warmth, made Don Sylvio laugh, in spite of all his efforts to stifle it; but, finding there was no likelihood of his leaving off, he at length interrupted him and said: "My dear Pedrillo, the business in hand is more serious than perhaps you may think. Fanfreluche is one of the most wicked and revengeful fairies that ever existed; and, what is still worse, one of the most powerful. If it be she that returned this evening to make me absolutely marry that monstrous Mergelina——"

"Adzooks, sir!" interrupted Pedrillo, who at these words had suddenly changed his mind, "if my lady your aunt is not your aunt, as you have been telling me, but, on the contrary, is that same cursed Fanfreluche, then, Heavens defend us, for what would you have us do against witches and spirits?"

"Hear me, my friend Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio; "the only way left us is to decamp this very night."

"How, this night?" cried Pedrillo, in agitation. "Oh, sir, don't think of it: the night is nobody's friend, and in such circumstances, do you see, I would not set a foot out of doors, if you'd give me as many doubloons as I have hairs upon my head. Let me die, if we should not meet with thousands of spirits, dragons, and porcupines to stop up the way every step we trod. I beg of you, dear sir, Don Sylvio——"

"Have done with your idle tittle-tattle," said Don Sylvio. "Have I not about me the portrait of my mistress, whose aspect alone is more than sufficient to keep all the monsters in Africa at a respectable distance; and has not the fairy Radiante promised us her succour in every exigency? We have every appearance of its being a fine night; and even though the moon did not shine a jot, I am in hopes that the fairy, in case of necessity, will send us one or more of her salamanders to light us along, and guard us from the persecutions of the fairy Fanfreluche. In a word, friend Pedrillo, if thou lovest me, thou wilt assist me in my designs; for, if we neglect this opportunity of escaping, God knows whether we may ever find it again. Be assured, I will not be ungrateful. I am not fond of promising more than I know how to perform; but the moment I have found out my princess, you may reckon your fortune made. However, in case you do not choose to accompany me, I assure you I would rather go quite alone, and suffer death a thousand times, than consent to pass one night more in this cursed castle."

Pedrillo, notwithstanding all his cowardice, was yet as honest a lad as any in the world. The tears came into his eyes when he heard these words from his master: he therefore determined to follow him in spite of all the spirits and Fanfreluches in the creation, even though he should set out in the darkest midnight.

CHAPTER V

A WALKING PARTY. DON SYLVIO'S PRUDENCE

SCARCE had they formed their measures, when the shrill voice of Donna Menzia was heard to sound at some distance from them. She led her company into the garden to take the air. This garden was not over-well kept up, but its situation and the manner of laying it out were yet very agreeable. Pedrillo had hardly time to hide himself behind a hedge of myrtles, and then slink away into another alley, from whence he might steal out of the garden unperceived, while Don Sylvio kept his seat till the guests came pretty near him.

As, setting aside his whimsies, this young man did not want for understanding, he instantly bethought himself that, the better to conceal his intended flight, it was necessary to affect such an air as, without contradicting too much his late declaration to his aunt, might keep her from despairing to gain her point with him.

Accordingly, he advanced towards the company with a slow pace, and a countenance neither quite gloomy nor altogether satisfied; mixed with a good grace in their conversation, and endeavoured to stifle that great disgust and secret horror with which the Green Dwarf's sister inspired him—an aversion so much the stronger, as the person strove to please him, and convince him, in every possible way, of her high opinion of his taste.

The vanity of the beauteous Mergelina happily made her amends for whatever a person of more

delicate sensations might have thought insupportable in Don Sylvio's mode of conduct; so completely, indeed, that she even appeared vastly well pleased with him, though the young gentleman kept himself strictly within the bounds of the most rigid politeness—that sort of politeness which cannot be dispensed with towards every stranger, and especially towards one of that sex which Miss Mergelina seemed to belong to.

As to his aunt, nothing could be more useless than his fear of her suspecting him of some ill design. She knew he was short of cash, and had no sort of acquaintance in the whole neighbourhood; she had not the least conception, therefore, of his intention to elope, while thus destitute of every necessary means for that purpose. Indeed, the tone of voice he had opposed to hers, and especially the last words that escaped him in his wrath, had a little disconcerted her. On this occasion she had determined to inform herself whether, during her absence, anything had happened in the family that could induce Don Sylvio to use so extraordinary language. But the necessity of keeping her dear Don Rodrigo company (for, at Rosalva, Mr Rodrigo Sanchez was as good a Don as Gusman) had hitherto left her no time for it. Besides, seeing her nephew so polite to Mergelina, she hoped he had at length thought better of it, and therefore supposed it could be of no use to cavil at a few expressions which, very probably, might only be the effect of a young man's hastiness.

CHAPTER VI

DON SYLVIO IS TRANSPORTED IN AN ECSTASY TO THE GARDENS OF THE FAIRY RADIANTE: THE SINGULAR MISTAKE IT OCCASIONS, WITH ITS DISAGREEABLE CONSEQUENCES

Our little society, or at least the ladies who were the soul of it, found their walk so pleasant, that night came and surprised them, without their even wishing to perceive it.

In fact, that night appeared to be so expressly formed to favour love. It was so clear and so agreeable, that the chaste Diana herself could not have chosen a finer to lull her beautiful Endymion asleep in, nor the Goddess of Love to make her Adonis happy.

The tender Donna Menzia and her Æneas insensibly loitered behind, and stopped in a thick shady retreat, very snug and obscure. Mergelina, on her part, who was no less tender, squeezed the hand of her conductor in a manner better calculated to express the strength of her passion than the lightness of her own hand; this she did, to extricate our hero from a reverie in which he, for some time, appeared quite absorbed.

Don Sylvio, who, no less than the rest of them, was struck with the beauties of silent nature, which seemed, as it were, stretched out in soft repose, fraught with charms delicately negligent, and clad in moonlight, as with a robe of transparent gauze; Don Sylvio, I say, in the height of his ecstasy, forgot both where he was, and whom he had got by the side

of him. He fancied himself transported into the enchanted gardens of the fairy Radiante; and that he was walking under arches covered with ethereal jessamines, intermingled with never-fading roses. The stars appeared to be so many male and female salamanders, sporting and dancing their airy rounds in those spacious fields of azure. The frogs that resounded from the neighbouring ditches were, to him, so many ravishing voices chanting forth the glory of his princess, and the felicity he enjoyed in loving her. In a word, he was so beside himself, that at the very instant when the beautiful Mergelina let him feel the weight of her hand, he imagined he saw his dear princess standing beside him.

"How!" cried he, all in a rapture; "and shall I venture to believe my eyes? Gods! is it a delusive dream of my impatient heart, or do I really behold thee, my charming princess? Has then the unbounded passion I entertain for thee at length triumphed over the power of a detestable enchantment; and has it at last restored to thee that divine shape whose dazzling splendours supply the absent sun, shedding a new and still more charming day over all the scenes of embellished nature——?"

In this strain of the sublimest extravagance did Don Sylvio run on, telling Donna Mergelina things beyond her comprehension. However, that did not occasion her being less affected by them: she judged at least, by the tone and vivacity with which he spoke them, that his discourse must be full of animated sentiments; and as she knew nothing of the tone of good company but from books of chivalry and high-flown romances, and was, moreover, greatly prepossessed in favour of Don Sylvio's education, she easily persuaded herself that this was the very style in which people of quality made love. It never came into her head that possibly Don Sylvio might be only laughing at her—probable as it might otherwise have been, and must have appeared to anybody else:

but in a girl of her stamp it was very natural for her not to think of this. She listened to him, therefore, without attempting to interrupt him, and with greater pleasure, in hopes that the fine things he said to her—and which, indeed, she could very well have dispensed with—might lead them into certain explanations, of which a young shopkeeper's lad in the neighbourhood, a very anti-platonic blade, had suggested to her some ideas in a former private conversation; ideas which, undoubtedly, were more suited to her ardent wishes than the sublimest declarations of love. However, not to remain in a state of total inaction, and to hasten the moments so much desired, she began to lean upon Don Sylvio in a very tender manner; she took him by his hand and pressed it to her bosom, which undulated with increasing rapidity to her chin; and, in short, she rolled about her glassy-looking optics so prodigiously quick, that they became as electrical and glittering as a cat's eyes in the night.

But whether our hero's imagination was exhausted by the quantity of incoherencies he had uttered to his dear supposed princess, or whether there was no illusion, extravagance, or enchantment strong enough to hold out against the aspect of Donna Mergelina: no sooner were they got out of the thicket, and Don Sylvio had an opportunity of seeing a little clearer, than, casting his eyes upon his companion, he started back with a great cry, and in an astonishment no less terrible than that of the Princess Laidronetta, when, instead of a husband whom she had thought more handsome than the god of Love, she found the horrid green serpent entangled in her arms.

"O Heavens! what do I see?" exclaimed he, all confounded; "what a frightful metamorphosis is here! Ah, thou accused Fanfreluche—and are not the persecutions which already thou hast made me suffer—are not they sufficient to appease thy unjust malevolence? What have I done, that, instead of

the charming princess, whom I supposed myself embracing, thou puttest this horrible dwarf, whose nauseous embraces, without the beneficent light of the chaste Goddess Luna, might have thus converted me into a monster, or at least have petrified me, as the sight of Medusa's head once did every beholder ? But think not that I will rest without taking vengeance for so dire an outrage. Speak, little monster; tell me where is my princess ? Thy life depends upon thy answer. I am aware of thy ridiculous pretensions to my heart; but know that, in spite of all the Fanfreluches, and of all the green dwarfs, I will crush thee beneath my foot, unless thou restore my love this instant to my arms."

Poor Mergelina was thunderstruck with this proposition. The enraged tone of voice and menacing gestures wherewith it was accompanied so terrified her spirits, that she began to cry out with all her might, so as to bring Donna Menzia and the noble Signior Rodrigo toward them as soon as ever the conversation would permit them, in which they were so deeply engaged.

It will be easily conceived how much they must have been astonished at what they saw and heard, at the state in which they beheld Don Sylvio, foaming with rage, and at the relation given them by the offended fair one of all that had befallen her—a relation which she did not go through without shedding a flood of tears. In short, they unanimously concluded that Don Sylvio's head was turned : who, on his part, by the harangue which he continued to hold on, in the heat of his frantic emotion, not a little conduced to fix them in their opinion.

The noise and tumult created by this scene soon brought all the domestics of the family to the place. The sum total was, that Don Sylvio, notwithstanding a very stout resistance for a time, was bound hand and foot, and carried up to his chamber.

There they undressed him, put him to bed, and the



faithful Pedrillo was commissioned to take care of him. Meanwhile Donna Menzia busied herself in her little apothecary shop, to prepare for him a strong emetic powder; and the nimble Maritornes was dispatched away in search of the barber to bleed him.

CHAPTER VII

DON SYLVIO COMES TO HIMSELF. CONVERSATION WITH PEDRILLO. THE ADDRESS OF THE LATTER, IN ORDER TO ELUDE THE VIGILANCE OF THE PRETENDED FANFRELUCHE

VIOLENT as the fits were, that every now and then attacked our hero, they soon, however, went off; though the principal cause of the evil was lodged in that part of the soul whose situation is determined by the divine Plato to lie between the lungs and the diaphragm.

No sooner, then, had he been left alone for a few minutes, than he came to his senses again, not a little astonished at seeing himself in his chamber, and in bed.

At length he discovered Pedrillo in a corner of the room, who, at the first motion his master made, had concealed himself, in a perpetual jeopardy of his falling again into one of his mad fits.

"Is it thou, my dear Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio, calling him with a gentle voice, and stretching forth his hand, "I thought thou hadst been one of those that have abandoned me: but thou hast too good a heart to do so; nor shalt thou one day have cause to repent the having been so affectionate to me."

Pedrillo wept for joy at hearing his young master talk with so much reason and composure, after having supposed him frantic: he testified his joy, therefore, by the most lively expressions that came next to hand.

"I neither comprehend," said Don Sylvio, "what

thou tellest me, nor what has been done to me. It is not above five minutes since I was in the gardens of the fairy Radiante, queen of the salamanders. Canst not thou tell me how I came hither, and who can have bound me in this manner ? "

" Oh, God help us ! " cried Pedrillo, utterly disconcerted, " what are you saying about salamanders and their queen, whom you have no more seen than I have seen my grandmother. Don't you know, sir, what has happened to you ? But, indeed, considering how they have used you, it is not to be wondered at if you are fallen into a syncope. I was just going to carry my wallet slily out of the house, when I heard a great noise in the garden ; I immediately threw my wallet behind a hedge, and ran with all my might to see what was the matter, for it seemed to me as if you was crying out ; but I came too late. These cursed people all in a breath declared, saving your presence, sir, that your head was turned ; or to speak more properly, that you were mad. Then they all fell upon you, and tied you without my having the least power in the world to hinder it. A plague take the rascals ! I see clearly now that all was a lie, and that you have your five senses as perfect as I, or any other good Christian."

" Hear me, Pedrillo," replied Don Sylvio. " But, first of all, untie me these bands, for I can no longer bear them. If I had a foresight this evening that some mystery lay concealed under the arrival of that old woman who calls herself my aunt, I am now fully ascertained what I ought to think of her. I have seen surprising things come to pass since thou leftest me in the garden ; but here we must only venture to utter it in a whisper. We are not safe in this place, and God knows what more may happen to us, if we do not endeavour to escape from it by a speedy flight."

" But how will that be possible ? " answered Pedrillo ; " the whole family is still up, and madam—

the old sorceress, I mean—will be coming in a moment to give you a powder of turpentine, as she calls it."

"What do you say?" interrupted Don Sylvio, "a temperate powder?"

"Let her call it what she will," said Pedrillo; "but I know, were I in your place, sir, I would not be such a madman as to take that powder. No, no, we must never trust the wicked. She might just as easily give you ratsbane, or the parings of her nails, as oyster-shell powder."

"Of that," replied Don Sylvio, "I have no great fear; but what I am afraid of is, lest they should give me a philtre, to inflame me with love for that ugly dwarf, who is either the daughter or the niece of that old sorceress, I know not which of the two. But I conjure thee, my friend Pedrillo, think of some method to enable me to escape this night, that so I may never more behold either the old or young one; for, upon my honour, the trick they have played me sits so much at heart, that it would be impossible for me to be master of myself, if I saw them?"

"But pray, sir," said Pedrillo, "after a short reverie, "don't you think this might be a very proper season for Madam Radamante to assist us? If she is so much your friend as she says she is, why does not she come to deliver us from the clutches of this old bawd? She might at least send us an aerial chariot, or Prince Hobgoblin's little hat, or something like it, and help us to get off the better. But this is just the way of these lords and ladies. When you want nothing they promise you golden mountains. Let him trust them that will! you may be sure they are not at home when you have most need of their assistance. I will lay you any wager you please, that she won't fail to come when we are once changed into scorpions or dragons, to pay us her compliments of condolence, and throw all the blame upon fate, or some unlucky jumble of the stars——"

"Do not talk so," interrupted Don Sylvio. "And

dost thou suppose, then, that the fairies have nothing else to do but to hold themselves always in readiness to receive thy orders whenever the whim takes thee to declare them? When once we find ourselves in such a situation as to be at a loss what to think or do, I am persuaded that Radiante will not then refuse me her succours. In the meantime, it is our part to attempt even impossibility itself, and to choose such means——"

"Hush, hush!" cried Pedrillo, "I hear the old sorceress, she is coming upstairs. What shall we do now? Let's see—oh, I have it: turn yourself on the other side, and make as if you were asleep. There, that will do; only snore a little, and leave the rest to me."

He had scarce done speaking when in came Donna Menzia with the powder and a glass of water in her hand.

"Well," said she to Pedrillo, who stepped up to meet her, treading on tiptoe, "how is Don Sylvio? I did not think it would have took me up so much time, but——"

"Softly, softly, if you please," cried Pedrillo, in a low whisper; "my young master has fell asleep within these few moments, and you know, madam, one must not wake the sleeping cat. Rest will do him more good than all the powders and medicines in the world."

"But has he had no new fits since you have stood by him?" said the old lady.

"No, Madam Fanfreluche," answered Pedrillo, looking sometimes at her forehead, then at her feet; "He only had——"

"What did you say?" cried Donna Menzia; "and what is it you called me, you fool! What do you mean by it?"

"Oh, dear madam," replied Pedrillo, all in a tremor, "I most humbly beg your pardon; it slipped from me before I thought. Nothing more easy,

madam, than to say one thing for another; but what I meant, madam, is that you would do well to let my master sleep on, for, not above half a quarter of an hour ago, he called out to me, 'Pedrillo!' 'Sir!' said I, 'what did you want?' 'Hear me, Pedrillo,' answered he; 'I know not how it is, but I am as tired as if anybody had beaten me all over; but methinks, if I could but sleep a little, I should soon be better.' So saying, he turned himself round, and fell into a doze: don't you hear him snore?"

"Yes," said Donna Menzia, after opening the curtains a little, "yes, yes, he is asleep. I am very glad to find him so composed. Don't you wake him, by any means: but if he wakes of himself, give him this powder: it will certainly do him a deal of good. Meantime the barber will be come to bleed him, for we cannot use too much precaution in these cases. His sleeping seems to proceed merely from weariness, and I am afraid the fever will only return the stronger when he wakes."

"As to that, madam," replied Pedrillo, "I think you may now go to bed very quietly, for I am in hopes the worst is over; however, I shall take good care of him; but as for waking him, it is what I will never do, though the Barber of Bagdad himself were coming. All I can allow him to do is to help me watch my master; for if unfortunately he should rave again, two people will not be more than enough to hold him."

Donna Menzia yielded to Pedrillo's reasoning, and, leaving her nephew's chamber, went to console the strangers, who greatly interested themselves in the young gentleman's welfare, with the news of his being better.

"What a terror hast thou put me in!" said Don Sylvio, the moment they were alone together; "when wilt thou learn to govern that cursed tongue of thine? Could ever anything be more stupid and thoughtless

than to tell her to her face that thou tookest her for the fairy Fanfreluche ? "

"Don't be angry, signior," replied Pedrillo; "for though it must be allowed I know how to commit faults, yet I know also how to mend them upon the spot, and that is no small art. It is no uncommon case for a goose to lose her egg; I mean, for the preacher in his pulpit sometimes to say one thing instead of another. But, as I have oftentimes heard madam say, the best general was he who committed the most faults—no, no ! he who best knew how—that is, he who, out of his faults—well, I cannot remember what it was ; but, however, I was speaking about faults, and this threw itself in my way so very oddly——"

"Why, sure thou art dreaming," interrupted Don Sylvio ; "what devil of a jargon is all this ? Thou knowest that things of far greater importance demand all my present cares ; and yet, hast been dinging me in the ears with thy wretched tittle-tattle. While I dress myself, go down very softly, and see if they are gone to bed. We must endeavour to get off before the barber arrives, or otherwise our departure will be retarded, and then all is over with us."

"Ay, there is the thing," replied Pedrillo. "Maritornes has been gone now above half an hour ; and if she have found him at home, we are not sure a moment but he will be here."

"Courage ! " said Don Sylvio, who was now almost quite dressed. "Go and do what I bid thee ; and when thou findest everybody is asleep, then go down by the little private staircase into the garden, and wait for me near the Green Castle at the lowest part of the wall, for it is pretty well crumbled away thereabouts."

"And have you your keys then ? " said Pedrillo ; "but no, I remember they took from you in the garden everything of iron you had about you; as, for example, sword, knife, keys, nay, and even your

corkscrew; for fear, truly, that you should do either yourself or somebody else a mischief."

"Well, well," cried Don Sylvio, "go, and wait for me near the Green Castle, for we have not a moment to lose."

Pedrillo obeyed, and in less than a quarter of an hour Don Sylvio, looking out of the window into the garden, saw Pedrillo trudging through a long alley of orange-trees which led to the Green Castle. Don Sylvio was just upon the point of following, when he perceived he had no sword on. To go in search of adventures without a sword seemed to him an unpardonable indecorum. "Though I have reason to hope," said he to himself, "that in case of need the fairy Radiante will give me one of diamonds, it would have an air of cowardice to think of availing myself only of an enchanted weapon." At length, however, he recollected an old sabre that used to hang in an adjacent room, among some other old iron and pieces of antiquity. This sabre, from its appearance, did not seem to have been drawn since the days of Ferdinand the Catholic: the weight, too, of this venerable blade rendered the necessity of using it very disagreeable to Don Sylvio: but as he did not know how to manage matters otherwise, he armed himself with it, fully determined at the first opportunity to exchange it for something better and more commodious.

The great silence that reigned throughout the house convinced him that all were asleep. He went, therefore, full of confidence, straight to the garden, where every moment's delay seemed an age to Pedrillo, so great was his fear lest the sudden return of Maritornes should discover their flight. This, joined to the dread of that chastisement which he apprehended on the part of the fairy Fanfreluche, had driven from his heart every other fear.

But the good fortune of our young knight had removed this difficulty: Maritornes, either fearing spirits,



or being unwilling to hazard her genteel person alone in the night, had permitted her lover the groom to accompany her. In their way this tender couple had suffered themselves to be overtaken by the charms of a night so seducing as at length to incline them to seat themselves down in a little thicket. What shall we say more ? the opportunity so favourable, the lover importunate, the fair one weak : in a word, they conducted themselves as Jupiter had often done before them upon similar occasions. The beautiful Maritornes forgot she was to find out the barber, and never thought of it more, till Aurora had awakened her and her dear inamorato from their gentle slumbers in that same thicket.

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

THE SECRET FLIGHT OF OUR ADVENTURERS. A DISPUTE BETWEEN THEM CONCERNING A TREE WHICH PEDRILLO TAKES FOR A GIANT

It was about half an hour past midnight when Don Sylvio, after having sent forth many an ardent sigh towards the sovereign mistress of his heart, set out on his journey to seek adventures, accompanied by his faithful and well furnished Pedrillo. Little Pimpimp, who by order of the fairy was one of the party, skipped playfully before them, and whether by simple instinct, or the secret impulse of some fairy, led them the same road on which Don Sylvio had found his princess's portrait. Pedrillo had great objections to this way, urging that there was a much more commodious path along the bank of the Guadalaviar, from whence you are gently conducted down an easy slope by the edge of the wood. But Don Sylvio insisted upon having no other guide than Pimpimp, whom he began to take for a kind of fairy, or at least some rational animal. Accordingly, Pedrillo saw himself obliged to yield, though most violently afraid of going through a wood in the night, his imagination making him see spectres in everything he met: and what is still worse, after having been hardly got an hour on their way, the sky was overspread so thick with clouds, that they could not, without great difficulty, make out their path in the wood, which was otherwise a very plain one.

This circumstance did not fail to put poor Pedrillo's imagination into an utter confusion. In a moment he called to mind every story about spirits and apparitions that he had been told from his infancy; every moment he fancied he saw something suspicious; trembling as much, and perhaps more, than one of Klopstock's devils, at the least noise he heard.

"Why, thy teeth chatter as if thou hadst the ague," at length said Don Sylvio, who had long observed his agitation, "what is the matter with thee?"

"Oh, dear sir," cried Pedrillo, stammering and catching hold of him by the coat; "do you see nothing, then?"

"Yes, I see trees," replied Don Sylvio, "as well as one can see them in this obscurity."

"Heaven defend us!" said Pedrillo, scarce able to breathe, "and don't you then see that frightful giant coming out there—there—to the left hand? See how he comes up out of the ground! ha, how he grows bigger and bigger! one would think he holds out more than a hundred arms at us; see where he comes on."

"Why, surely," said Don Sylvio, "thou art mad; open thine eyes again, and thou wilt see thou hast taken a tree for a giant; thou oughtest to die with shame."

"Oh, Heaven grant this be not something far worse than a giant!" replied Pedrillo. "A tree, do you call it? pray, whoever yet saw a tree that had arms and thighs?"

"But I tell thee it *is* a tree, thou poor simpleton," said Don Sylvio; "what thou tookest for arms are its branches; it seems to grow bigger, because the ground on which we are walking is a little raised; and in the next place it seems to approach us, because we approach it. If thou art so fearful as to take oaks for giants, I should be glad to know for

whom thou wilt take the real giants, that we shall probably meet with by and by. For my own part, I swear to thee, that all the trees of this forest might become giants without exciting in me the least fear of them."

"I beg of you, my dear master," said Pedrillo," do not talk so loud; my hair stands up upon my head to hear you speak at this rate. The giants might take you at your word: believe me, sir, one single giant might find you so much business as to give you enough of it. I beseech you, then, to avoid him, and not to irritate him.—Oh, poor lad that I am!—this devil would not concern himself to examine whether I be innocent or guilty: he would crush me to pieces just as well as yourself."

"Ay," replied Don Sylvio, laughing, "I knew very well thou wert afraid only for thy own skin; but take courage. The fairy Radiante hath appointed thee my companion; she taketh thee, therefore, as well as myself, under her protection. Hold up then, I tell thee once more. If every tree in this forest were to become a giant, and from every leaf there sprung a little devil, we should still have nothing to fear. But, in one word, dost not thou now see that thy giant is neither more nor less than what I tell thee? We are now very near it; and if that is not enough to convince thee it is a tree—an oak—I will cut off a branch of it to give thee a demonstration."

"Ah, my good sweet sir!" exclaimed Pedrillo, catching him in his arms, "do not so, I entreat you, for all the world: let that alone, and do not make yourself and me both miserable by your rashness. Granting that it were now an oak, or an ash; it's enough for me to have seen this monstrous giant with my own eyes. I will not absolutely say a giant; God only knows what it was: but I well know what I saw, mind me. The devil, God help us! is very cunning. He can as well——"

"And dost not thou know, then, Pedrillo,"

interrupted Don Sylvio, "that I begin to be tired with thy fooleries? Upon my soul, I think you want to make a Don Quixote of me, and to persuade me to take windmills for giants. Mind now, and see what my sentiments are of these same giants." So saying, he drew his sabre, and with one stroke cut off a pretty strong branch of the tree.

Pedrillo was at first so greatly terrified at this rash action that his fright had nearly overset him; but as soon as he beheld it was attended with no ill consequences, his courage began to revive. "Signior Don Sylvio," said he, "I could never have believed you were of so determined a spirit: God forgive me! I thought you could never have been fool enough to have attacked the devil and his grandmother: but don't let us cry victory too soon: only see whether the branch does not spout forth blood."

"Take it and look; view it thyself," cried Don Sylvio, holding it to him; "and now confess, for once, that thou art the greatest oaf I ever yet saw in my life. Tell me, then, where didst thou pick up all these impertinent foolish notions which thou hast just been uttering?"

"Nay, sir, look ye," replied Pedrillo, "what I told you is not so very stupid as you perhaps may think. I have read many histories in this way; and what has happened may just as well happen again: for example, I remember this moment a Troyon prince, I think they called him Coridor or Isidor; for it was something with a dor: this prince was changed into a cypress by a Mahometan enchanter; and when Pope Æneas Sylvius ordered this cypress to be cut down, I don't recollect why, there came blood out of it at every stroke, and good blood too, I assure you, and as red as any you shall meet with. The people were terribly frightened, as you might well suppose; but Pope Æneas, who immediately comprehended there was some mystery in it, gave them orders to follow their blow. Well

now, and what do you think came to pass? Why, they heard a voice, an extremely lamentable voice come from it, which said that it was the soul of this same Isidor, or what you please to call him; and then it told what had happened to it, and how it had been changed into a tree by that infidel enchanter, without having been able to make its confession or prepare itself. Then it begged every good Christian soul that stood by, to say a few dozen Ave Maries, for the softening of its pains and torments; and in short went through its supplications in so affecting a manner that the audience all burst into a hot flood of tears."

"Well, Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio, after the historian had finished his narrative, "as to this matter, I must confess thee to have had a prodigious share of reading; and as for the gift of story-telling, I'll bet my castle and whatever I have besides, if there be either at Salamanca, or in any other village or university in Spain, any bachelor of them all, that can dare cope with thee. I defy them all put together, to join a Trojan prince with Pope Æneas Sylvius, called Pius II., as you have done; unless it be in the infernal regions, where certainly Æneas Sylvius cannot be; for he was one of the most pious and learned popes that ever yet filled the Holy See."

"Ay, so you are pleased to say, sir," replied Pedrillo; "but, whether you speak seriously or no, I can assure you, though I have never studied for it, I am not afraid of anybody in these matters, let him be who he will, though he were a bachelor three times over, or even a doctor of the seven faculties. 'Tis not above eight years since I knew all the stories in *Ovidus Nasus* by heart, as well as the fables in *Florian's Chronicles*. Perhaps, sir, you would not have supposed me to have so much learning; but, let me tell you, I had the memory of an elephant, and our old curate, God bless him, often told my grandmother, that if I was but put to studying,

I might very like become a bishop, if please God; or even, perhaps, a vicar-general: and who knows, if my lord your late father had not took me into his service, just as my grandmother thought of sending me to her brother's, who was then churchwarden of a village not far from Toledo, and, as many people said, had great interest with the archbishop; who knows what might have come about? But don't imagine, sir, for all this, that I mean to say I have lost anything by the change. There is a livelihood to be got everywhere. You know that I have served you, as it were, from your infancy, with all fidelity and loyalty; and I am sure you will one day make my fortune, when, God grant it may soon be, we shall have found your princess; for though you are as noble a gentleman as any in Christendom, I am persuaded, however, that you would keep your word just as if you were only a peasant."

Pedrillo ran on at this rate a long while, without the least attention from his master, who was totally absorbed by other reflections. Pedrillo was loquacious for the same reason which excites little children to sing when it is dark; for his fear was so great that he sweat great drops in abundance: not a saint in the calendar to whom he did not offer some vow, if he would but bring him into daylight again safe and sound.

CHAPTER II

MEMORABLE ADVENTURE OF THE SALAMANDER AND THE DITCH

In spite of the darkness of the night, which increased every minute, our travellers got on so far as to be pretty nearly out of the forest, when they perceived before them a very spacious field, the sight of which gave poor Pedrillo the highest transport imaginable. He instantly turned his footsteps thither, and his joy considerably increased when at a distance he beheld a light which he took for a sign that there must be some cottage or farmhouse thereabouts whither they might retire, and wait for the approach of day.

But his joy was presently changed into fear and horror, on perceiving that this light came near him, and grew considerably bigger as it came. Don Sylvio, on the contrary, had no sooner caught sight of it, than he cried out with transport, "Well, Pedrillo, now I hope you see that I have not been flattering myself with a vain hope, in reposing my confidence upon the aid of the fairy Radiante."

"And what then would you have me see?" demanded Pedrillo.

"Why, surely, thou must be more blind than Tiresias was, to ask such a question," replied our hero. "Dost not thou then behold the salamander there, advancing towards us in all the most splendid pomp of an inhabitant of the empyrean heaven?"

"A salamander!" cried Pedrillo; "where is it, I pray? For I can see nothing but a will-o'-the-wisp, condemned to traverse about these places,



to expiate the offences committed during his lifetime."

"Oh, thou sot!" answered Don Sylvio, a little vexed, "will thy superstitious eyes never behold anything but these chimeras which thy old hag of a grandmother inherited from her great grandsire, and has transmitted in succession to thy stupid brain? What thou takest for a will-o'-the-wisp is a salamander, I tell thee; nay, more, and one of the most beautiful that surround the shining throne of fairy Radiante. Dost thou not perceive how the locks of his hair, like curling sunbeams, flow down his neck, that resembles the aurora? Dost thou not behold his eyes sparkling like two stars? And canst thou not discern those wings of azure streaked with light, wherewith in flight majestic he cleaves the ether as an immortal spirit?"

"Oh, good Heavens, Signior Don Sylvio," cried Pedrillo, striking his forehead, "either I am a madman, or you are not in your right senses: may I be tossed in a blanket if, notwithstanding all you have been saying, I can see anything but a little globe of fire that moves in the air, now forwards, now back again, and of which I have seen hundreds in my lifetime: you shall call it what you please; but for my own part, I have always heard say, that as to these will-o'-the-wisps——"

"Friend Pedrillo," interrupted Don Sylvio, "if I did not pity thy simplicity, I could be tempted to shut thy impudent mouth in such a manner as should make thee remember it for ever. I should have thought Mr Pedrillo might well have referred himself to me when the question turned upon what is a salamander or what is not. To *me*, I say, who have seen more than ten thousand of them in the fairy Radiante's train. Once more then, I tell thee, it is a salamander, who in all probability is charged with some commission for me; or perhaps he may be sent merely to show us our

way: whatever may be the cause, we will follow him, and wait the rest with patience."

"Well then, let it be a salamander if you will," replied Pedrillo. "You must certainly understand these sort of sublime things better than I: you were possibly born on a Sunday, for they say children born then can see spirits at high noonday."

"What thou hast said," replied Don Sylvio, "is not entirely destitute of foundation. This may be one of those advantages with which some fairy honoured me at my birth; insomuch that the elementary spirits, who are commonly imperceptible by vulgar eyes, are not invisible to me."

"But if this were so," replied Pedrillo, "it would be necessary that I should see nothing at all now; according to your description of it, this salamander must be as beautiful as a cherubim. Now why does he envy me the pleasure of seeing him in all his splendour, and why must I behold him under that terrible figure of a will-o'-the-wisp?"

"That," answered Don Sylvio, "is the fault of thy troubled imagination. If thou hadst not an head already filled up with these will-o'-the-wisps, thou wouldst certainly see the same as I do. 'Tis with thee now as to the salamander who is become our guide, just as it was before with regard to the oak which thou tookest for a giant——"

"Softly, softly, Signior Don Sylvio," interrupted Pedrillo, "pray don't touch upon that string; let us carry the sponge over it. I thought one politeness demanded another; and if I let your salamander pass muster, you might very well overlook my giant; besides, who knows whether these two things may not have more to do with each other than one might imagine; for, to tell you the truth, the ground upon which your salamander has led us begins to become a little plashy or so: I am vastly afraid lest he should treat us no better than will-o'-the-wisps are used to do: these wicked rake-hells

have no greater pleasure than to torment poor travellers, and lead them either into a ditch or a bog."

Pedrillo had hardly done speaking, when Don Sylvio, who went on boldly, and followed the pretended salamander with hasty steps, sunk all on a sudden up to the knees in a ditch. The moment he heard him splashing in the water Pedrillo eagerly came to his assistance, which he did with so little precaution that he met with worse luck than his master; for he tumbled all along into the thickest of the puddle. The lamentable cries which he sent forth made our hero afraid that his valet had either put his foot out of joint, or broke his thigh; accordingly, he cried to him, "What is the matter with thee, my good Pedrillo? What makes thee exclaim so piteously?"—while he endeavoured to drag himself out of the mire as fast as possible, and as well as the length and weight of his sabre would permit him.

"And where are you then, my dear master," cried Pedrillo in his turn, with a very doleful voice; "are you still in your own shape, or are we now changed into frogs. God help us! Methinks already I hear myself croak, unless the terror I am in has turned my poor head. Well, well, and so it's come to this, is it? Did not I tell you beforehand that this would be the case; now then, will you be kind enough for the future to reflect a little upon what I say to you? Where now is this same salamander, pray, with golden wings, azure locks, and starry eyes? Oh, the devil take him! for little does it concern him how we get ourselves out of this filthy mud."

"The evil is not near so great as thou imaginest," said Don Sylvio, "and though it were ever so bad, it shall never be laid at the salamander's door. Why did not we take care of ourselves? He lighted us sufficiently; and if he disappeared, it was only on account of the impertinence of thy tongue."

"Oh, don't say so," cried Pedrillo, who by this

time had scrambled out of the bog; "deuce take it! I think my tongue has been sufficiently punished for it, and even more than was necessary. I tumbled all my length in, and presently got whole mouthfuls of liquor, which had not the taste of Muscadel, I can assure you."

"Enough," said Don Sylvio; "in an expedition like ours, we must accommodate ourselves to everything; but, to tell thee ingenuously, I myself begin to doubt. Though I could readily swear that we have seen a salamander, yet it is not impossible but our enemies, who dare not use open violence, may have availed themselves of this stratagem to set us against the pursuit of our enterprise."

"If I might be permitted to speak," said Pedrillo, "I very well know what I should say."

"And prithee, then, what is it thou wouldst say?"

"Why, that our enemies are not at all to blame."

"And how so, Mr Pedrillo, if you please?"

"Because I think we seem to have been tolerably mad, to travel at this rate by night, and in the dark; to run over hills and dales, break our heads against the trees, and then to tumble into ditches, and bury ourselves in quagmires; and all, forsooth, for a fine reason: namely, to fly away from a little purse of a hundred thousand ducats, which we might marry when we would, without its costing us a farthing more than a little yes."

"By what I can see," replied Don Sylvio, "the ditch has made a considerable change in thy mode of thinking. But, before we enter further into the business, pray be so kind as to look into our knapsack, and take me out a pair of stockings, for those I have on are so wet and uncomfortable that I can bear them no longer."

"Well, sir," said Pedrillo, "you still have more reason to be satisfied with the salamander than I have; for I am so embalmed all over from head to foot, that it will take me at least a whole day to get

dry again. Methinks I see yonder a little rising ground, where we may cleverly sit us down and change our linen. You see now," he continued, opening his wallet, " my cares were not superfluous ; we might have rested here with our arms across a pretty long while, I fancy, before the fairy would have brought us fresh linen. But to return to our business—I suppose we are now sufficiently cooled to talk of our affairs pretty soberly. Would it not be as well then, Don Sylvio, for us to wait here till daybreak, and then return quietly to the place from whence we came ? It seems to me, look ye, as if we had undertaken an affair that we shall never see the end of. Upon my credit, I had rather look for a needle in a bottle of hay than for a butterfly in this vast universe ; not to mention the inconveniences to which one is exposed : as, for instance, these scratches in the face, and bunches upon one's head ; these broken shins, giants, salamanders, ditches—and all this for the love of what, forsooth !—for the beautiful eyes of a butterfly—all, by St James, that could have been done, even for the fair Hecuba of Greece ! It is true the butterfly is a princess ; but, look ye, sir—to tell you all I think of the matter, for I have always been a very ingenuous lad—there is still such a *but* here as spoils the whole affair. A butterfly princess is in truth a butterfly of distinction ; but, deuce take it, a princess that is only a butterfly is even less than a puppet-show princess ; for when the Princess Tacamahaca or Rossabarba, with her picked chin, tinsel crown, and long train of mohair worked in mock silver, retires behind the scenes, still we find the genteel Lolotta left, who, take her for all in all, is at least as good a princess as the best of them, and does not make all this to do. I hope you won't take what I say amiss ; and so, look you, sir, as I was going to say——"

" Very well, Pedrillo, very well," cried Don Sylvio ; " all this goes on wonderfully, thou speakest like a

Cicero; go on, I beg of thee; for I am curious to know what thou meanest to have said when thou hast done."

"That you shall see presently," answered Pedrillo, "though I know you have a mind to laugh at my expense: but it would not be the first time that an ass has given good counsel to a prophet. 'Children and fools tell truth,' says the proverb. The upshot of the whole matter is this, 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush;' and as the folks say, 'Vain wishes never gain riches.' 'Tis true, Lady Rademante has promised you great things; but 'Promise and pay are two things,' says John Peretta; and indeed, if you consider right, it would be just as if one should make me a present of treasures that were still to seek, without knowing where. Let them say what they will, sir, would it not be much better for us to hold what we have already? Donna Smergelina is a young lady, which, by the way, is no despisable thing: and, upon my conscience, a hundred thousand ducats is a good round sum: and if in the end there should be some few hundreds less, it will possibly be more, sir, than the principality which your princess shall bring you in marriage is worth. Besides, if you did but recollect, don't we all know who this same Donna Smergelina is? Why, she is, at least, certainly the niece of the fairy Fanfreluche; and though Fanfreluche be as old and as ugly as you please, still she is a fairy; ay, and full as good a fairy as another; and at one stroke of her wand, can turn all the tiles of your castle into rubies, if she chooses."

"All this is vastly fine," said Don Sylvio; "but thou thyself hast granted that Donna Smergelina is too hideous to excite love."

"Well, well," replied Pedrillo, "I grant you she is not the handsomest in the world; and yet, if you observed, she has a something or other in her countenance——"



"Yes," interrupted Don Sylvio, "as much pimple and small-pox as you please."

"Ah, sir, but what is all that to the point? Beauty is one of those flowers which very soon fade; beauty passes away, virtue keeps her ground; the little violet has a better smell than the proud but stinking amaranth. Besides, Madam Smergelina is not so ugly as you make her out. I must confess she is, as one may say, tolerably crooked; and, at first sight, one might fancy her to have red hair; but when you look at it in a certain light, it borders upon a rose-colour, and really does not at all misbecome her! In short, sir, were I in your place, I would do like the one-eyed man. A hundred thousand ducats ought to excuse us the trouble of paying too narrowly; all cats are grey in the night; and money does everything; money rules the world; no penny, no paternoster: this is my maxim, and I shall not change it, though all the seventy wise masters of the East were to prove me the contrary."

Don Sylvio, who, with the best mind in the world, was in very good humour this morning, took so much pleasure in the chat of his prattling valet, that he let him talk on without interruption. Accordingly, Pedrillo entertained him with a long detail of all the advantages which a marriage with the fairy Fanfreluche's niece would procure him; then reckoning up the hundred thousand ducats, and the tiles to be changed by the fairy into rubies, he presently built as fine castles as ever were built in Spain. In a word, by this means he had heated his imagination to such a degree, as for a good while not to perceive that Don Sylvio was fallen into a very sound sleep. Not being therefore philosopher sufficient to pursue a soliloquy, he at length ceased, and, after giving his bottle a few cordial embraces, found out the softest bed and easiest posture, and soon followed his master's example.

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH PEDRILLO IS VERY DISAGREEABLY ROUSED FROM HIS SLUMBERS

HONEST Pedrillo was snoring his best, when all on a sudden Don Sylvio burst from a terrible dream which had interrupted his repose in the most disagreeable manner. "Oh, thou cursed Green Dwarf!" cried he, seizing Pedrillo by the throat, "give me back my portrait, or thou diest this instant!"

"Hollo! Help, help, murder, fire, help!" exclaimed Pedrillo, defending himself with kicks and fisticuffs, when he found himself so unpolitely roused, without knowing why.

"It is my princess whom I demand of thee," cried Don Sylvio again, "or else——"

"Oh, by all the devils," roared out Pedrillo, scrambling as fast as he could to get free, "is it you, sir? And is the devil in you, that you want to throttle me so by main force? Plague on 't, one is not sure of one's life with you!"

"How!—what!" cried Don Sylvio in the utmost perturbation, "is it thee, Pedrillo?"

"Yes, ay—with a vengeance," answered the other; "'tis me indeed, unless they have made a changeling of me. What the deuce can be the matter with you, to fall upon people asleep in this manner? Let me tell you, sir, if you go on at this rate—I am your Highness's most humble servant—let them go and look for butterflies that will; you won't easily make such a fool of me, I assure you."

"I know not where I am," replied Don Sylvio.



" I now see with my own eyes that thou art Pedrillo ; but——"

" Oh, cry you mercy, Signior Don Sylvio de Rosalva ! Your servant ! Mighty fine, truly ! You are extremely kind at last, to allow me to pass for my mother's own son ; but do you suppose then that all is said and done ? I' faith, you might have twisted my neck off before I could have had power to see how it was done. Now, pray, only observe and see how you have used me ! Upon my life, if you treat your friends at this rate—but I'd lay any wager now, some dwarf or salamander had a hand in it."

" Well, well, compose thyself, my dear Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio ; " thou art very sensible I never in my life had any intention to hurt thee : and by the life of my princess I swear to thee, it is inconceivable to me how it could have happened that the cursed Green Dwarf should have thus escaped me, when I had him in my power, and should have put thee in his place."

" Why, look there now ; did not I tell you so ? " cried Pedrillo : " still nothing but that Green Dwarf ! Did not I tell you before, that the moment we set foot out of doors, the devil would bring all the dragons, and giants, and dwarfs, and monsters in the universe upon our backs ? This will never be the case by daylight, I'll answer for it. Oh, but now I call to mind, sir, did not you say somewhat about the Green Dwarf ? I thought he had been changed into a tooth-pick. Methinks, under favour of madam the queen of the salamanders, she is not very strict to her word. God forgive me ! I know one ought not to think evil of one's neighbour ; but upon my conscience, sir, I'll be shot if she does not make game of you."

" Prithee," said Don Sylvio very gravely, " speak with more respect of so great a fairy, or thou wilt one day repent it. I tell thee now for the last time that I will no longer bear the insolence of thy licentious

speeches. Before thou hadst spoken, thou might'st better have heard what hath befallen me. What right or need hast thou to determine before thou knowest the point in hand ? "

" I did not suppose I was committing so great a crime," replied Pedrillo seriously ; " I thought I had sense enough to know a crab-apple from a quince. People shall never make me believe what they please ; and, begging your pardon, I am not so great a simpleton as I may seem to be. 'Tis not five minutes ago you wanted to choke me, because, forsooth, you took me for the Green Dwarf. Now then, I reason in this manner : either the Green Dwarf is a tooth-pick, or he is not a tooth-pick. If he is not a tooth-pick, the fairy has—you know what : but, if he is a tooth-pick, then how the devil can I resemble a tooth-pick ? Now, look ye, sir, this is an argument, I hope, that nothing can be objected to ; and I could only be glad to know how you will be able to get over it."

" Oh, peascods take thee ! " said Don Sylvio, smiling, " what, dost thou pretend to meddle with dilemmas too ? If thou goest on at this rate, nobody will be able to cope with thee. However, only allow me to speak in my turn, and then we shall see the better how to manage the argument."

CHAPTER IV

HOW WONDERFUL ARE THE EFFECTS OF IMAGINATION !

PEDRILLO having promised to moderate the intemperance of his tongue, Don Sylvio began his story in the following manner: "No sooner hadst thou fallen asleep by my side——"

"Hold there, sir," interrupted Pedrillo, "for, with your permission, how could you know this, when you was asleep long before me, while I watched you?"

"Thou keepest thy promise wonderfully well," said Don Sylvio. "Wilt thou be kind enough to let me speak without interrupting me?—I shall never have done if I am to answer all thy impertinent questions. I tell thee I was not asleep, and let that content thee.—While I lay thinking of all that has happened to us, I beheld a sylphid before me."

"A sylphid!" cried Pedrillo, stopping short, and staring to observe his master's countenance.

"Yes, a sylphid," replied our hero with great composure, "and the most beautiful too, that ever was beheld by mortal eye. 'Don Sylvio,' said she, 'I know whom you are seeking; come with me, I will lead you to your mistress; I am an old friend of hers; but I cannot do you this pleasure without having some interest in view.' 'Oh, beautiful sylphid,' cried I, throwing myself at her feet, 'there is not that thing in the world which I would not do for thee, to testify my gratitude, so thou wilt but fulfil thy promise.' 'What I ask of you is but a trifle,' replied the sylphid; 'come first, and see your princess: we

shall settle about the rest.' Upon this she took a rose from her bosom, and threw it on the ground. All on a sudden this rose was transformed into a chariot of rubies, in the shape of a conch-shell, drawn by twelve birds of paradise of incomparable beauty. I seated myself beside her, and in a few minutes we descended into a place the most delightful that imagination can conceive. I should never have done, were I to attempt to give thee a description of it."

"Oh, sir," said Pedrillo, "pray don't let that trouble you; if the description is a little of the longest, so much the better. I could willingly listen to you all day without eating a morsel, so much do I love to hear you tell a story."

"Figure to thyself, then," continued our hero, "an immense plain, in which the magic of some fairy had collected together all the charms so boasted by the poets of Tiber and Tarentum, of Thessalian Tempe, and the delightful groves of Daphne; enchanting thickets, silver streams flowing in wild meanders; meads embroidered with flowers; walks of orange trees; little lakes surrounded with myrtles; bowers of jasmine, and roses of a thousand dyes—in short, everything that can be imagined, in a place consecrated to pleasure and to love. Troops of young nymphs, lightly dressed, were seen, skipping like fawns amidst these myrtle shades, or dancing over these transporting fields with the gods of love, or bathing their snowy limbs in grottoes, where endless silence reigned."

"Well, Signior Don Sylvio," interrupted Pedrillo, "it must be confessed you were born under a very happy constellation. O brave! long live the sylphids, say I; why, this is quite another thing from those dogs of salamanders, that are good for nothing but to lead one into a ditch! But, pray, why did not you take *me* out upon this same party? But this now is just your way. When

any agreeable scheme is going forward, nobody thinks of me."

"Patience!" continued Don Sylvio. "'No one can be reckoned happy before his death,' said the sage Solon: "this seems to be my lot too, destined at every turn to experience the fact to my sorrow. Having, then, turned my view on all sides of this charming scene, I perceived a nymph seated in a shady bower, and playing with a butterfly, that fluttered about her, fastened by a thread of gold. O Heavens! what did I feel, on beholding this to be my adorable princess; for it was the very same blue butterfly that we hunted after!—'And is it thou, young gentleman,' said the nymph to me, 'who, under the protection of the fairy Radiante, hast undertaken to disenchant the blue butterfly?'—'Yes, beauteous nymph,' I replied, ''tis I, ready to sacrifice to you even life itself.'—'Nay,' interrupted she, 'I do not ask so much; if thou canst prove to me that thou art Don Sylvio de Rosalva, the butterfly is thine.'—'Oh, speak,' returned I, 'say in what manner thou wouldst have me prove it; too sure am I, that he whom thou seest before thee is my own individual self, to suffer me to fear that probation, whatever it may be.'—'Show me then the portrait of the princess,' said she; 'thou must have it, if thou art Don Sylvio; I require no other proof than that.'—Ah, my dear Pedrillo, how wretched am I! where, at that fatal moment, was my protectress, the fairy Radiante? I gave her the portrait; but no sooner had she got it in her hands, that I beheld—Heavens, how shall I have power to tell thee!—with horror I beheld, instead of the beautiful nymph, the Green Dwarf before me. That little hunchbacked monster could not contain himself for joy. He leaped up into the air, turned and turned the portrait in his hands, gnashed his teeth against me, and then, grinning horribly a contemptuous smile, he cried: 'At length, then, I have what I so much desired!

Know, thou impotent rival, that none but the possessor of this portrait is capable of restoring to the butterfly her pristine shape. I now have them both in my own power, and thou hast no more to hope. Go and thank the ecstasy of transport in which thou seest me, for suffering thee to escape with life. But beware; remember what I now tell thee. I shall mark thee closely, and if thou henceforth presumest even to think of thy mistress, thou art a dead man!"

"Figure to thyself, dear Pedrillo, the rage into which this discourse, and the aspect of that hideous gnome, holding the portrait of my mistress in his clutches, must have put me. I instantly fell upon him, struggled, fought; firmly resolved, either to lose my life, or tear from him that image of my dear princess——"

"The design was good and laudable," said Pedrillo, "but pray, what occasion was there to bring me into the squabble, and that too just when throttling was the word?"

"That," replied our hero, "is what I cannot comprehend. I fought the dwarf, as I was telling you; and just as I was upon the point of strangling him, thy exclamations, and my own eyes, showed me it was thou who laidst struggling under my hands. The dwarf had disappeared, and I found myself in the same place from whence the nymph had taken me."

"Well," said Pedrillo, "and pray then what became of the sylphid?"

"The sylphid," replied Don Sylvio, "must have disappeared the moment we set foot to the ground, for after that I saw no more either of her or her chariot."

"Why, this is the devil of a story," cried Pedrillo; "it begun so well, that upon my soul, 'tis pity it should have ended no better. But, pray, now, might a poor fool like myself only be permitted to ask

you a single question: you really then, signior, do believe that all this really happened to you."

"And why not?" answered Don Sylvio: "there is not the least room to doubt it. I was broad awake when all this fell out. I saw it with my own eyes; heard it with my own ears: I had the use of all my senses: and therefore I must have been awake; and if so——"

"Ay, ay, that now is exactly the question," replied Pedrillo, "I would not positively say so much; but though you are so particular and so odd as not to suffer one to suppose that you might dream as well as other good folks; yet I know—but however I won't say it; and yet I think what I think."

"Thou imaginest, Pedrillo, that this was only a dream; I could wish it were so with all my heart. But——"

"Look ye, sir," continued Pedrillo, "we should make a distinction in everything: when you had the apparition of the fairy Radiante, I at first thought you had only been dreaming, till you showed me that rich jewel, and the portrait which she had given you; and then, indeed, there was absolutely nothing to be said against it. What the eyes see the heart believes. Now, if you could only let me see a single feather of one of those birds of paradise that drew your chariot, I would give it up; but, bless my heart! what need have we of all these pros and cons. You have the jewel still and always about you, the same which you said the dwarf had stolen from you. Only look under your doublet, and you will again find the princess in the same place where she usually is——"

"Oh, a miracle!" cried Don Sylvio, finding in reality the portrait on his breast, where he commonly used to put it. "Thou art right, Pedrillo; thanks to the kind protecting Radiante, I have it; do but see here!"

"Sir," said Pedrillo, "for once, methinks, you do the fairy rather too much honour; and I'll venture

any wager you will, though I have nothing to lose, that the Green Dwarf has seen the blue butterfly and the portrait, only just as much as I have seen the pope. Here, sir, you have been sleeping, and everything has appeared to you in a dream ; at length you waked, and then caught hold of me by the throat. O' my conscience, I think you might as well have dreamed that part of the story, as all the rest. And I swear, the next time you are disposed for sleeping, I shall be kind enough to remove myself at least two hundred yards from you. I have no desire to suffer punishment, waking, for what a dwarf shall be pleased to do with you while you are asleep."

It might however have been pretty difficult to bring Don Sylvio into his companion's sentiments concerning this adventure ; but Pedrillo, who for this once found himself on the right side of the question, never left off, till he had brought his master to confess that he himself found it hardly possible to conceive how the Green Dwarf should so soon be delivered from his condition of a tooth-pick. At length they both agreed that the whole had been nothing more than an illusion, which Don Sylvio immediately put to the account of the fairy Carabossa, who, as he assured Pedrillo, was an intimate friend of Fanfreluche and the Green Dwarf ; and then concluded, that this lady, not having it in her power to hurt him immediately, had taken a malicious pleasure in disturbing his mind, and rendering his journey painful and unpleasant.

Pedrillo was satisfied with these reasons, and both of them set off walking and chatting, till the great heat of the day obliged them to take shelter in the wood, and enjoy the benefit of its shade.

CHAPTER V

IN WHICH THE HISTORY RETURNS TO ROSALVA

THE faithful author of this singular and pleasant history finds it absolutely necessary to interrupt for a moment the thread of his narrative in order to inform the reader of what passed at Rosalva Castle during the above period.

Dona Mariternes, whom we left sleeping with her faithful Pyramus under the protection of the nymphs and fauns, when sent out after the barber, no sooner waked than she saw daylight appear. Immediately she called to mind her having been deputed to find out Master Blas the barber. At first she began to consider what she should have to say, if they asked her the cause of her delay; then, not being able to hit upon any plausible reply, she fell to tearing her fair golden locks, and raised such a miserable outcry as presently awakened her lover, who demanded the cause of this despair. "What, is that all, my little honey?" cried he, as soon as she had told him the grievance, "I'll soon find you out a remedy. I know Master Blas very well; he is in love with a certain young girl, a handsome, plump, rosy thing that lives at a farmhouse, about half a mile from his village. She is the farmer's own daughter; and as Blas plays well on the guitar, as everybody allows, there does not a night come, but he is under her window thrumming and singing away, ready to split his lungs. You have nothing else to do then, but to go to him this morning, and tell him that you were there last night, but could not find him: then you shall

bring him with you, and tell madam that you had express orders to stay for him, and that you were determined not to come back without bringing him with you, or something of that sort. But take care now, my little dear Maritorne, not to play or trifle with him; for, look ye, Master Blas is a jolly fellow, that loves to make free wherever he can, and I should not much like that, not I. You understand me, don't you? Pox take him, I don't understand trifling in these matters."

Maritornes, now perfectly consoled, spared no pains to assure her lover, and make him easy on this head. The latter, on whom the morning had the same influence as the evening, convinced her, by new proofs of his tenderness, how deserving he was of her love and fidelity; but, apprehending the rising sun might become jealous of their happiness, thought fit therefore at length to retire from her embraces, and betake himself very quietly to his stables, where, for want of better, he commonly reposed upon half-mouldy straw, and a few rags of the mule-coverings, in company with two or three horses, that had more the appearance of skeletons than of those animals.

It was near six o'clock in the morning when Donna Menzia waked. The expectation of that happy epocha (at which, in consequence of the good opinion she entertained of her own charms, she flattered herself with being waked much more agreeably), brought to her mind the accident that had happened to her nephew the day before; an accident which threatened her amorous ardour with a very irksome delay. She therefore rose up, wrapped herself in her nightgown, and hastened immediately to her nephew's apartment, to see how he had passed the night. She stared about her to some purpose, as may well be supposed, not seeing the least traces either of master or man. After having therefore sought for him in every hole and corner, she assembled the whole house, who were filled with consternation at the news

of this disappearance of her nephew and Pedrillo. Those who have ever loved as Donna Mergelina loved, will be able to represent to themselves the grief which rent and distracted her tender heart, at receiving such unexpected tidings. Kind, good creature! She would infallibly have swooned away, had not her uncle's arms, and her presumptive aunt's *eau de luce* come in very opportunely to her assistance. Nothing was to be heard for a long while but groans and lamentations. Mrs Beatrice, who, having long had very serious views respecting Pedrillo, had moreover flattered herself with holding no small share in his friendship, was the only one who would not believe that they had escaped.

"You will certainly find them," said she, "in some part of the garden, or else in Don Sylvio's green summer-house, where he commonly passes the morning."

At this signal every one ran into the garden, dispersing themselves round on all sides; then they made a strict search among all the hedges and bushes, ransacked the kitchen grounds, and, at length, not finding anybody, they began their inquiries anew. Maritornes, who, with the barber, was just now arrived, mixed herself with the rest of the seekers, and carried it on as naturally as if nothing had happened. She had likewise taken the precaution to make sure of the barber, by certain little instances of complaisance, with which she thought she had not too dearly purchased the advantage of escaping reproach. There was no want, therefore, of people to look out; yet all was equally to no purpose. Accordingly, after having overrun the garden, the grove and park, till noon, they at length found themselves obliged to return to the castle as they came. There Donna Menzia convoked all the company into the great hall, to deliberate upon an event as melancholy as unlooked for. Several questions were instantly brought on the carpet at the same time:

every individual reasoned differently, and formed his own conjectures; and as they all spoke together, the noise beame so great that they could not hear one another. At length, however, Signior Rodrigo exerted his authority so powerfully, though with a deal of trouble, that after a general silence it was resolved to hear everybody distinctly, and to talk one after the other. Every possible expedient, every imaginable scheme, was presently exhausted. First, Signior Rodrigo, in particular, a great disputant in his profession, and who had moreover one of the finest bass voices in the world; then Master Blas, the barber, who, for the volubility of his tongue, merited to be the dean of his faculty, distinguished themselves so well, that the sessions lasted till two in the afternoon. But when the time came for putting matters to the vote, and then for proclaiming the conclusion, a new tumult arose: every one maintained his own sentiment, and after Mrs Beatrice and the barber had put themselves to all imaginable pains to restore tranquillity and good order, they at length concurred in the conclusion following: "That no one could conceive what was become of the strayed sheep." But as it was now near three o'clock, and everybody was hungry, it was unanimously resolved, "That first and before all things, it was necessary to dine;" and that in the ensuing sitting, it should be enquired into, "What was to be done next in this critical state of things?"

Our Spanish author, who, as being in the train of a certain well-known minister of his nation, had made a stay of some years in G——, takes the liberty on this occasion to divert himself at the expense of certain small republics, for he pretends to have observed that the deliberations in Donna Menzia's hall exactly resemble those which you meet with amongst them; and that it was even a copy of their manner of treating public affairs. It must be confessed the anecdotes which he cites are hardly



calculated to give us any great idea of the republican state: but we are to recollect this is a Spaniard's account of things, whose whole liberty consists in the prerogative of wearing two or three pairs of large spectacles upon his nose, and of sitting at his door cross-legged, picking his teeth, and dozing as long, and dreaming as profoundly as he pleases. From such a one we are not likely to gain a very exact estimate of the advantages of political liberty, any more than of its inconveniences. How indeed could this same man, so dazzled with the pretended grandeur of his nation and of his king, be able to make an observation like the following, viz: "That it often requires more dexterity to regulate the complicated springs in a little state, composed of freemen, than to command half a world of slaves?" We all know how far prejudices may be carried, even from the case before us, and consequently, if Don Ramiro de Z—— imagines that he has represented to us the state of such little republicans, in this deliberation at Rosalva, we, in our turn, might oppose to him certain examples drawn from great monarchies; in which, after a variety of conferences and profound debate, the influence of a waiting-woman, a player, or a buffoon, has prevailed over the consummate sagacity of scores of men, with large periwigs and long cloaks, *à la mode d'Espagne*.

Be this, however, as it may, I apprehend nobody will blame the translator, because his patriotic spirit would not allow him to translate a passage which the enviers of republican felicity might possibly have turned to some improper use. A regard for our country is a duty that ought to extend itself even to our minutest actions; and if he only can merit the name of a good citizen who is content with the present state of his republic, we can never blame that horror which prevails in little states at everything that can be called political satire; for with good reason is that horror entertained. Far from us,

therefore, be the ideas of wishing, though but for a moment, to interrupt that noble repose, that gentle slumber, in which our country is buried in this respect. Let Don Ramiro have observed what he pleases, we shall still wrap ourselves up in our patriotism, bite our lips, and sit down contented.



CHAPTER VI

A BREAKFAST CONVERSATION. DON SYLVIO'S JEALOUSY

NOT a little fortunate was it for our adventurers that such wise delays governed the deliberations at Rosalva. We left our hero and his faithful Pedrillo in a wood, whither they had retired for shelter from the hot noonday sun. They had not proceeded far, when Pedrillo, in conformity with the sentiment of Asclepiades and other skilful naturalists, represented to his master that when folks travelled in a morning there was nothing better than to take a good breakfast, especially if they wished to secure a successful journey. Don Sylvio having no good reasons at hand to oppose this remonstrance, Pedrillo chose out a commodious spot for them to sit down. He then opened his wallet, and took out a large pie, which Mrs Beatrice had brought from Xelva, but for a very different purpose.

"Don't I discover in your looks, sir," said Pedrillo, "some little astonishment at seeing this pie. Oh, that good Mrs Beatrice! She'll make large round O's with her eyes when she finds her bird is flown. But you see now what it is to be clever, and keep good company. If Mrs Beatrice had not wished me well, we might have been forced to content ourselves with a bit of bread and a handful of shabby filberts."

"And was it she, then, that gave thee the pie?" said Don Sylvio.

"No, not just so neither," replied Pedrillo. "But yesterday evening, you must know, when she went

into the pantry, she made signs to me to follow her, and we talked together a good while. In short, I must own to you, I wanted to steal a kiss of her, for I have always heard our old curate say, that giving a kiss was but a venial sin : she, however, turned away her head in such a hurry that I missed her mouth by at least a foot. But, i' faith, it was not very much out of luck, for I stumbled just upon a place where her handkerchief was half open, and I'll assure you, signior, it was softer than velvet, and as white as the driven snow. She grumbled at me indeed, as you may suppose, and, I think, gave me a little slap into the bargain ; but I soon pacified her, for in token of reconciliation she gave me this piece of seed-cake, and then we trifled away and chatted together a good while longer, for 'tis opportunity that makes thieves, you know, and Mrs Beatrice is not near so great a prude as you would take her for by her looks. Whatever she may make believe, she loves a little romping for all that, take my word for it. Well, and then she showed me this pie, and then some other things that she had brought from Xelva to treat our strangers with. I fixed a longing eye upon this same pie the moment I saw it : and now, sir, only do you guess how I got at it ; you would not have thought me so dexterous, I'm sure. But mark me, Signior Don Sylvio, though I may be simple enough, I am not quite an oaf, and were it to give you a pleasure, I could even go to Rome, God forgive me ! and steal the Pope's slipper, if it was necessary."

" Well, but how did you manage it then," said Don Sylvio, " for certainly she must have taken the key of the pantry with her, and put it in her pocket."

" Even so," answered Pedrillo ; " but one finds a remedy for everything but death. As soon therefore as everybody in the house was asleep, I stole away very softly to her chamber door, clapped my ear to the keyhole and listened awhile, and, when I heard her snore, I opened the door gently, and went



a-tiptoe to her bedside; though the room was as dark as a dungeon. At last, however, creeping and groping about, I found out the bunch of keys which she commonly carries at her girdle, and took myself off with them very quietly. Now then, you know the whole secret, for as soon as I had once secured the keys, the pie could not long escape me. Ods bobs! I pocketed away to some tune; and to convince you that I have forgot nothing," continued he, lugging a bottle out of his knapsack, "see here! Do but taste this Alicant wine, and if it is not as good as you ever drank, I'll engage to drink nothing but water with the geese as long as I live."

Here Pedrillo made a great pause, but his grinders were not a whit the less idle for his not talking. In short, he acquitted himself so well, that almost before you could look round you, the pie found itself less by above a third; nor did he forget to pay his hearty and frequent respects to the bottle, always drinking to the health of Mrs Beatrice. This at length put him into such high good-humour, that he began to sing and whistle like a blackbird. "Huzza!" cried he, lifting up the bottle and turning it round and round, "long live the fairies and enchanted princesses! Adzooks, what a pleasant life is this same hunting after adventures! But, i' faith, one ought to have a good well-stuffed wallet too. Well, but how now, signior, what's the matter with you? Why, you have not a bit of good humour about you. You neither eat nor drink; pray, what ails you? Come, come, deuce take it; hang sorrow and cast away care; let us be gay so long as we are not married, who knows when we shall have such another jovial batch. 'Twill be time enough to be sad when this *vadus mecus* and our bottles are empty."

"My good Pedrillo," cried Don Sylvio, "thou art in the right to make thyself as merry as thou canst; but don't concern thyself about me. I am heartily



pleased to see thee so gay; thou wouldst not be so wert thou in my place."

"But why not, sir, and please you? What new gadfly has stung you now?"

"Ah, Pedrillo!" replied our young knight, "how can I forget the great distance at which I stand from the dear, the inestimable, object of my vows! What obstacles, oh, what insurmountable obstacles have I not in all probability still to overcome? I can assure thee, if the promises of the fairy Radiante did not support my courage, the ideas which at present distract my mind, would, I really think, drive me to despair."

"God and Our Lady of Guadaloupe preserve us!" cried Pedrillo, "how you do frighten people. But since these are nothing but thoughts, why don't you drive them away? Why, pox take it, this is just what they call plaguing oneself for mere fun. Look ye, sir, I am hearty and well, you see; I have no cares nor pains, and so long as I have but enough to eat and drink, I'm as gay as a lark, and give myself very little trouble about what to-morrow may bring forth."

"Tell me, I prithee," replied Don Sylvio, heaving a deep sigh, "how can I be in good humour, or at all composed, while my dear princess is wandering through the world in the shape of a butterfly, which perhaps of all the shapes in creation, is the most dangerous for my love."

"Dangerous, do you say, signior? And pray how can that be? what danger can there be in her being a butterfly; for you yourself have told me that she has nothing to fear from the crows?"

"The fairy flattered me indeed," continued Don Sylvio, "that the princess loved me: but who shall insure me that an inclination, which, properly speaking, was but the issue of a flying moment, will retain its hold in her heart against all those snares."

"Oh, the plague take all enchantment," interrupted

Pedrillo; "are you dreaming, sir, or do you know what you say? How can the shape of a butterfly be a dangerous shape, or how can you be afraid of any snares laid for her heart, while she continues to be a butterfly? Never since the hour I was born did I hear such things. O' my conscience, he seems to have been quite in the right, who said, 'That to fall in love and to run mad were the same thing.' Jealous! what then, and would you be jealous of the butterflies who might possibly approach her under that form? Adzooks! what a droll idea! He! he! he! Why, this is just now for all the world as if you should turn jealous of the fleas skipping under her petticoat, when she is turned into a real princess again. He! he! he!"

"Hear me, my friend Pedrillo," replied Don Sylvio very gravely, "I have observed a good while that thou art mighty desirous to play the buffoon; but be pleased to take notice, 'There is a time for all things, and nothing in the world can be more disagreeable than people that crack their jokes out of season.' Tell me, hast thou ever read the history of Prince Little Page, or that of the Prince of the Island of Perpetual Spring?"

"Of Prince Little Page?" replied Pedrillo; "no, on my conscience, I don't know him, and it is the first time I have ever heard his name."

"Why, then, you know nothing about the Island of Butterflies neither?" continued our hero.

"The Island of Butterflies, did you say? Pray, is not that all one, as if one should say, the Island of winged Caterpillars?"

"Yes," answered Don Sylvio, "in one sense it is. Know then, that these butterflies are a sort of winged genii, perfectly resembling in shape and beauty, the little gods of love, or the sylphs. They are moreover of so amorous a complexion, but at the same time so volatile and so inconstant, that they are always fluttering about from one object to another.

No sooner hath such a butterfly sworn an eternal fidelity to one fair, but he is instantly upon the wing to tell a second she is the sole object of his ardent love. In a word, the same day, nay, often the same hour, sees their flame kindling, blazing, burning, and extinguished; and scarce have they tasted happiness with one, when in the same moment their love and their memory evaporate together."

"Well," cried Pedrillo, "this is a droll way of making love: and so then, these butterflies can talk?"

"But I do not tell thee that they are common butterflies, but a species of sylphs, who, as a certain Arabian naturalist observes, are the stolen fruit of love between a fair young sylphid and a youthful faunus. That supernatural beauty, that perpetual youth, and ethereal agility with which they are endued, comes to them from their mother's side, as from their father's they inherit temerity and inconstancy."

"Good lack! Well, now I call to mind—I know now what you are talking about," cries Pedrillo. "Ay, ay, I have seen some of this sort of little winged boys in the great picture that hangs in madam's closet: you must remember it too, sir; it represents the loves of Florus and Zippora."

"Thou art forever puzzling names, Pedrillo: thou meanst to say, of Zephyrus and Flora."

"Yes, signior, that is what I meant truly; it did represent Florus and the beautiful Zeppora. She is beautiful indeed, upon my word. I never could have courage to look quite full at that picture; for our vicar says it is a sin to contemplate upon such sort of things. But I know what I know; what speaks for itself does not want an interpreter; and between ourselves, signior, the good vicar is not made of the most bashful stuff, and it would not be much amiss it he was to begin the reformation with his own person. Pray, now, can you guess who I found him

with by chance a little while ago, for upon my word it was not designedly? Why, with our fat Maritornes, and it was not to rehearse his breviary, believe me, signior! I shall say no more, for if it were to be known it might make mischief, and then one had better see nothing at all. All that I mean by it, signior, is only that the fact is very certain, and that you may take me at my word. But I tell you beforehand, if you should think of mentioning a word of it, I stand to nothing; not a syllable, trust me—if the question was to be put to me, ay or no? For, i' faith, it is not good to know too much about these sort of gentlemen. You take me, signior?"

"But what then hast thou seen?" demanded Don Sylvio.

"Oh no, pardon me, signior, I am ashamed to tell you," answered Pedrillo. "As it was Maritornes, 'twas rather too much; but if it had been Mrs Beatrice——"

"Enough, enough!" said Don Sylvio, blushing, "I don't want to know any more. But what didst thou mean about the picture?"

"Ay, true, about the picture? Why, if I remember right—yes, 'tis so—I told you, mind me, and I'm a rogue if it is not true, that I never could find courage to look steadfastly at it. However, I just saw that it seems to represent her a-bathing. Only fancy to yourself then, that she thought herself alone, and that it was in the heat of summer. In short, she is as naked as the back of my hand, and then, look ye, there is her lover Florus, sitting upon a cloud, looking at her as earnest as if he could eat her up with his eyes; and then comes a vast sight of these little boys with butterflies' wings, fluttering about her, and scattering roses."

"Good," interrupted Don Sylvio; "but thou must know, that by the power of an enchantment, under which they are held by love, whose indignation they have brought upon them, these butterflies

lose their shape as soon as they raise themselves above the island where they were born. In short, they become winged caterpillars, or at least appear so because nothing of their former shape remains but their wings. Under this shape, then, they mix themselves among the true butterflies, and enjoy at pleasure certain privileges, which even a vestal could not find it difficult to grant to these little innocents, not thinking that their irresistible propensity to gallantry has already often rendered them more dangerous under that shape than one should easily conceive. For, as they can talk——"

"Talk!" interrupted Pedrillo; "that must be very droll if it be true. By Saint James! a butterfly talk! I could only wish to see one that knew how, and I promise you I would get as much money by it, in less than a month, as would buy me all Valencia, if the king had a mind to sell it. So then, at last I perceive, signior, where the shoe pinches you. Well, truly you are much in the right, for o' my conscience, a butterfly that can talk, and is a sylph too, and before you can look round you can change himself into a handsome young fellow, is not a matter to be laughed at. There is always a possibility that the princess may get acquainted with one of those little whimsical young devils, and then they might creep under a bush together and be sociable all the live-long day; and then one word follows another, said the good country girl, and then by degrees they come a little and a little nearer each other, and then—you understand me, signior; I shan't tell you all that might happen afterwards. But we are all poor sinners; and this poor thing would have nothing more to do than to forget, for a moment, that she was your mistress, and then we should see fine doings."

"If I did not know," cried Don Sylvio in a rage, "that thou art the most prating fellow in the world, thou should pay me with thy blood for that



unbridled licentiousness with which thou hast dared to sully the virtue of my incomparable princess."

"I most humbly beg your pardon, signior," said Pedrillo, retreating some steps back at every word; "I wish I may be hanged, if I had any such wicked intention as you lay to my charge. You make yourself angry at every little word I say. Bless my soul, one cannot wash a cloak without wetting it. Ods bobs, you either are jealous, or you are not: if you are jealous, you certainly must have good reasons for it; and if you have none, what a deuce can make you pretend to jealousy?"

"If I am jealous, as thou art pleased to call it," replied Don Sylvio, "I am so only of her heart; not that I feared she could be capable of a step which might render her virtue suspected. She is destined for me; I have the fairy Radiante's word for it, and the princess knows she can never be other than mine. I am therefore secure of her person, and should detest myself if the least shadow of a suspicion could enter into my soul. Our person is always in our power, but not so our sentiments; another may be master of her heart, and I myself might only possess her beauteous person."

"May I be burnt, Signior Don Sylvio, if I comprehend a syllable of all you have been saying," interrupted Pedrillo. "What can you mean with your heart, and your person, and your sentiments. Ods bobs! when I have her person, I have her heart, and when I have her heart I have her person too; one can't go without the other. Look ye, signior, I don't at all understand these fine high-flown notions; but I reason in this manner, as, for example: If I had a wife that did not love me with all her heart, my forehead would itch terribly if she was virtue itself. He who has once got the heart of a woman, d'ye see—But hark!—what a deuce is that?—hush!—what a noise! Don't you hear something, signior?"

"No; and what dost thou hear?"



"It was a noise that came out there, on that side; just there, out of those bushes——"

"Perhaps it was some bird——"

"Great Heaven, signior, it may not be some bird of prey. I hear no more of it now, though. But what was I saying?—Oh, we were talking about your jealousy; well, and then I told you—mercy on us! there's the same noise again! Ah, powers defend us! what is that which comes there? God help us, it is a she-dwarf, signior; 'tis a hobgoblin!"

"Silence, thou poltroon," whispered Don Sylvio, as he stood looking to make out the object which had thrown Pedrillo into so terrible a consternation, "I see now what it is; 'tis a fairy."

"A fairy, do you say? Yes, truly, one of those fairies that ride through the chimney to the devil's meeting on Sundays, mounted upon a pitchfork. A fairy! yes, 'tis as much like a fairy as I am like the Grand Turk."

"Stop, Pedrillo, and do not talk at this rate. It is very possible this may be one of my fairy friends. The most beautiful fairies have sometimes appeared in the form of hideous old women, in order to see what respect shall be paid them under that external semblance."

"Ah, now I see what it is," cried Pedrillo. "He! he! he! 'tis a gipsy, signior; only look at her, that's all. 'Tis a gipsy, I tell you; no doubt of it; and she comes just in the nick of time to tell us some good fortune."

"Have a care what thou sayest, Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio in a low voice. "It is a fairy, I tell thee; at least it is possible she may be one, and in that case it is better to take the surest way. Let her be what she will, we will treat her as a fairy, and then we can run no hazard."

During this conversation, the supposed fairy came up to them. She was neither more nor less than an old humpbacked fortune-teller, that had her reasons



for strolling about the neighbourhood, and found herself at least as much surprised as our adventurers could be, especially when she perceived a young gentleman with so noble an aspect as Don Sylvio trudging it afoot, and equipped in so singular a manner.



CHAPTER VII

ADVENTURE WITH THE GIPSY FORTUNE-TELLER

As soon as the gipsy was come near them, Don Sylvio rose up, saluted her very civilly, and asked her if it were in his power to render her any services.

"Saint Barbara!" cried the old hag; "what can such a handsome, well-made young nobleman as you are be doing here in the wood? Surely you must have lost your way, or perhaps you may be in search of——"

"Aha! madam gipsy," interrupted Pedrillo, "none of your curiosities, if you please; we did not ask you what you were seeking after. And pray who told you——"

"Silence, thou blundering rascal!" cried Don Sylvio, casting at him a look full of fury and indignation. "You had reason, my good mother, to be surprised; but, as it seems, you are not ignorant of the cause which led us hither——"

"Heyday, grandmother!" cried Pedrillo, for now the fumes of his Malaga had begun to operate not a little in his brain; "you know how to tell fortunes, don't ye? Come hither; look me this gentleman in the hand, and tell me whether he has got a lucky physiognomy?"

"I have no need of his hand for that," replied the old woman, "I see it in his eyes. Ah, my modest rosy-faced young gentleman, 'tis but early days with you, and yet you already know what love is, I warrant you. Ha, ha, ha! you blush, sir. Have not I guessed it now?"



"Pox take ye, you old gossip!" cried Pedrillo. "You see that in his eyes? So then, I suppose you see, by the same rule, that the princess he is in love with is a butterfly; hey?"

"A butterfly!" cried the gipsy, "hi! hi! hi!—very fine, truly! O' my conscience, I believe 'tis a true butterfly: has it got wings already, my young squire? Has it taken flight, hi! hi! hi! I have known butterflies of this sort too; there was a time when I kept a good stock of them in my cage at Seville, believe me. But I fancy from your beating about here, that she you are in search of is fled away."

"Why, mother," said Pedrillo, "one would almost think you know more of the matter than we do ourselves. But prithee now, since you have seen so much in his eyes, you will see still more in his hand—at least they have always told me so.—Give her your hand then, signior, if you please.—Look me there, granny; what do you say to those lines?"

"Upon my honour," answered the gipsy, "it is a beautiful white hand. Harkye, my pretty sir, if you put a ducat into this beautiful white hand, I'll tell you such good fortune as shall charm you."

"A ducat!" cries Pedrillo, "very fine truly, grandmother! Prithee now, have not you been drinking a drop too much this morning? A ducat, indeed! If you had said a real, look ye, one might possibly have talked with you. But, in short, we want none of your predictions; for, d'ye see, we know everything that we need to know."

"Ay, but you don't know all neither," replied the old woman; "who knows what shall happen hereafter? You are not yet come to the end of your adventures, and so far as I can see——"

"Here, here's the ducat, my good mother," said Don Sylvio; "let this chattering fellow alone; 'tis an honest lad, but he does not often know what he is talking about; you must not mind his nonsense."

"My dear pretty sir," answered the gipsy, "you



are so kind and so obliging, that by Saint Ignatius there is not that thing in the world I would not do for you, were I but what I have been in times past. There was a time, believe me, when I made no contemptible figure: but you see, old age will steal on in spite of one's teeth. However, it does not hinder me from remembering the day when I was called the genteel gipsy girl, and the young gentlemen of Toledo disputed who should give me the first serenade. To tell you the truth, I made lute and guitar strings dear, and I'll assure you it rained pistoles and sonnets for me at the same time."

"Well, well," said Pedrillo, "we don't trouble our heads about a few serenades you may have had a hundred years ago, while the devil was a little boy, and you had all your teeth in your head. But to the point in hand, if you please; you have got our ducat, and it is but fair we should have your bargains. Your hand, signior——"

"Only one little ducat more, my dear sir," cried the gipsy, "and then I will tell you such a fortune that you could not wish for a better."

"Well, here," said Don Sylvio, holding her the ducat in his hand, while Pedrillo could hardly contain his choler.

"'Tis a beautiful hand, as I said just now, a very lucky hand indeed, young gentleman. He! he! he! did not I tell you now? you are in love, my little honey, are not you? Nay, nay, you need not blush, my good sir, you are exactly at the right age. Ah, that love is a fine thing. Heyday! How is this? let us see; you are in love with a sweet pretty little girl, a charming young maid——"

"A witch! upon my soul, a witch!" cried Pedrillo; "she is a charming creature indeed, and as small as a wax doll into the bargain."

"A young lady—very young, but a little flighty or so——"

"Ay, flighty, indeed," said Pedrillo, "for she flies



it over hedges and ditches where the devil himself can't follow her——"

"No matter for that, we grow older every day. However, she loves you too. Ain't I right?"

"Oh ho, that now is just what we would wish to know, for we have some little suspicion; or as one may say——"

"Hold thy prating tongue!" cried Don Sylvio; "canst thou not be silent a moment?"

"What did you say? She loves another?" continued the gipsy. "Oh, the wicked little creature! Love another? that's a pity; but this is the way with these young girls. They that do but tell them fine things, and chatter and flatter away, are sure to make the best of their time with them. Yes, indeed, she loves another! I'd venture any wager it is one of those sugar-lipped Jack-straws, those butterfly things, that fly and buzz about every flower and never stop at any——"

"Hollo, madam gipsy," said Pedrillo, observing his master turn pale at these words, "you tell us more of the matter than we wished to know."

"'Tis enough," exclaimed Don Sylvio, pulling away his hand; "let me go, my misery is determined: she hath even read it in my hand."

"Nay, but what does all that signify," said Pedrillo, "so long as people can't see it upon your forehead? Hark ye, grandam, let us talk of something else. Pray, what do you say to my hand? Here's two reals, and I fancy they'll make you see fine things."

"Upon my word," cried the old woman, after looking at his hand a moment; "well, what a strange planet were these young people born under! Why, I protest you are both of you as amorous as so many sparrows! Out upon it! Here are five or six wives at first sight, all upon one line——"

"Five or six wives? why, you are raving, sure;

you meant to say girls : what a devil would you have me do with so many wives ? "

" Oh, whenever you have too many, you may share them with your neighbours," said the old woman ; " they won't die upon it, believe me. I hope you don't pretend to have a pretty wife to yourself alone. I' faith, I see one of them there in your hand, who I think bids very fair for procuring you some friends."

" How, what ! can you see in my hand the person I am thinking of this minute ? "

" Undoubtedly," said the old woman.

" Well then, we shall see. Is she tall or short, old or young, plump or thin ? Answer me that, mother."

" She is neither over-tall, nor over-short—good ! Nor is she very young nor very old—Adso !—And she is, as one may say, rather plump than thin. Is it not so ? "

" God bless me ! But pray, how do you manage to see all this in my hand ? And so then you can see those large black eyes ? "

" Yes, surely ; and fine black eyes they are—ay, and very sweet and bewitching ones too ; yes, yes. Black eyes, black hair, and teeth the whitest and prettiest that ever mouth was filled with. Now ain't I pretty near the mark ? "

" Near ? a peascods take it ! why, you know as much as myself. But come—a fine bosom, hey ? "

" Oh yes, that's of course. But if the tailor had not——"

" How ! what do you say about the tailor ? There you are mistaken, I promise you. No, no ; no tailor, if you please : no, faith, if that were all the difficulty you should soon see her rank with the first Infanta in the world, believe me. But what do you say to her little feet ; are not they very genteel ? Do tell me. And then the legs ?—indeed, you can't see them by reason of her petticoats—but you may trust me for that ; no turner could make 'em better."

"You are quite right, she is a charming little creature, by my troth, finished from top to toe; but so much the worse for you, young man."

"But why so?"

"A fine question that, truly! You'll know why, I can tell you beforehand; you'll know what it is to have a pretty wife. She'll only plant something there, a little above your eyebrow; remember, 'twas I that told you: she'll plant some certain things for you, mind me. I shall say no more."

"Nay, s'death," cried Pedrillo, "methinks you have explained yourself clear enough already. She will plant me something there indeed: what you mean to say, she will fix horns."

"I will not positively say horns, but, however, something there will be—something that will set your forehead an itching, mind me—a few sprouts or so. In short, if thou ever hast a house of thy own, I advise thee to get the doors made as high as possible, for one cannot be too careful in these cases. But I am losing my time; I think I have now told you enough for your money, and you ought to be satisfied: business calls me away. Adieu, my young gentlemen, till we meet again."

So saying, the gipsy left them. Her departure left poor Pedrillo in a cruel dilemma, and he knew not what to think of it. "Oh, the devil," cried he, running towards his master, who had thrown himself down at the foot of a tree in a fit of the keenest vexation, "if this old humpbacked sorceress is not a fairy, sir, as you said just now, it is the devil himself speaking by her mouth. There is certainly some magic or other in all she has been telling. How could she know that you were in love with a princess, and that this princess is a butterfly? And then, as to Mrs Beatrice, has not she painted her out to me as naturally as if she herself had made her?—and yet to-day is certainly the first time she ever saw us in our lives. What do you say to it, signior? For my

own part, I confess to you I should be afraid of going mad, were I to think of wishing to understand more of this dark affair."

Don Sylvio, absorbed in the profoundest meditations, paid no attention to his fellow-traveller's harangue; at length, however, his clamours all of a sudden roused him as from a lethargy. "Hear me, Pedrillo," said he; "I will tell you my sentiments of this adventure, and I am sure that I am not deceived. But what is become of the old gipsy?"

"She disappeared, signior, I know not how. I only turned my head to look t'other way, and in that moment of time she became invisible."

"Pedrillo," continued Don Sylvio, "I own to you I was not immediately capable of supporting the uneasiness into which the news of my princess's infidelity had thrown me. At first this circumstance did not much disturb me, for thy own indiscretion had dictated it to her. But this particular detail of the butterfly, to whom I have been sacrificed, too strongly confirmed my former fears to suffer me a moment's further peace; and yet, since I have better reflected on all she said—for full well do I remember every word, joined to the tone of voice and look with which she spoke, I am the more persuaded that the mock salamander, the sylphid with whom I travelled in the morning, and this old gipsy, are all but one and the same person, and that all these apparitions are nothing but wicked artifices by which my enemies seek to divert me from my design. In a word, I have not a moment's doubt of this old gipsy woman's being, in reality, the fairy Carabossa. One thing is certain; she had exactly the same figure which history gives that fairy, for she was short, humpbacked, and had squinting, bleared eyes, and a swarthy countenance. However, be that as it may, I am firmly resolved not to suffer myself to be staggered by all these artful wiles. No, divine princess!" continued he, with an elevated tone of

voice, looking at her portrait and kissing it tenderly, " nothing shall ever make me capable of stifling that pure immortal flame which thy heavenly beauty hath kindled in my heart ! I will love thee still, how cold, inconstant, or faithless soever thou may'st be to me ! But whither am I going ? Cursed be the idea that represents thee faithless, after what the gentle fairy, our protector, hath testified of thy tenderness for me ! Ah me ! perchance at this moment thou art lost in some desert, far, far remote, whither thy sorrows and thy destiny have transported thee ! There, perhaps, thou art reposing thyself in the bosom of some new-blown rose, invisible to my sight, watering it with thy tears, and sighing that I have forsaken thee ! But, good Heavens ! could I be base enough to forsake such excellence ? No, charming mistress of my soul, not death itself, under the most terrible form in which the cruelty of our enemies could dress it—not death itself should prevent my shade, animated by deathless love, from pursuing thee everywhere, following thee through every scene of being, and without envying the gods their spheres, incessantly seeking in thy breast its perfect elysium ! "

Don Sylvio uttered this pathetic apostrophe with such rapidity of speech, and in so tender an accent, accompanied with such affecting emotions, that tears started into the eyes of poor Pedrillo, who had been listening with the utmost attention to his master, gaping and staring at all he saw, and unable to comprehend a syllable of what he heard.

" Upon my soul, Don Sylvio," at length he cried, wiping his eyes, " you have a very surprising gift at melting people's hearts. How is it you manage to say such fine things, and what can it be you have got into your head ? Pox take it ! if you were a parson and preached in this manner who could help crying to hear you ? O' my conscience, there would be tears enow to drown the congregation : I know not what I would not give to be able to keep such



things in my head as you have been talking of, and yet I think I have kept some of them—such as the new-blown roses, and bosoms watered with tears, and immortal shadows; and then you mixed it with something about the spheres and gods, and somewhat or other about love and Saint Elizabeth. I'll be shot if I can comprehend how you are able to put such things together. But to come to the point——"

"True, true," interrupted Don Sylvio, "our first care should be to seek the blue butterfly. Pack up your bundle and let us be going. But, I see, here is more than one path into the wood. Prithee, where is Pimpimp? methinks I have not seen him for some hours."

This question was like a thunderclap to Pedrillo, who suddenly called to mind, that ever since the adventure of the ditch, he had taken no thought of Pimpimp. However, not being sure but his master might look upon so great a neglect as unpardonable, he boldly assured him that the dog could not be far off. "I carried him all night in my arms," said he, "for the poor little beast was so tired that he could go no farther. He was here this morning when the old woman came. I'll call him; he cannot be far off." So saying, he cried out with all his might, and his master joined the chorus. This done, they began a diligent search after him, but with just as little success as the Argonauts, when they sought the beautiful Hylas, whom the nymphs had carried off and concealed in their grotto beneath the briny deep. Running through bush, through briar, and along the shores, "Ah, Hylas! Hylas!" with such din they cried as made the forest and the shores resound. In vain, for now was Hylas fast locked in the arms of the most beauteous nymph, and neither heard nor listened to their cry. Such was the case now, only with this difference, that Pimpimp at the time, instead of the arms of a fairy nymph, found himself in the grip of a vile old gipsy, who, after taking leave of our travellers,

met with him half dead with fatigue, hunting for his master, and finding him genteel and pretty, took a fancy to him and commenced his guardian.

Don Sylvio was extremely afflicted at this new disaster, which damped his spirits to such a degree as almost to cool his courage for further achievements. Pedrillo had no great difficulty to persuade him that the fairy Carabossa had stolen Pimpimp away: but it was not quite so easy to divert him from a thousand extravagant resolutions suggested by his despair.

"This might possibly have been the lucky moment for Pedrillo to have made his master the proposal of returning to the castle; but since his late conversation with the pasty and bottle of Alicant, his thoughts had, in some measure, taken a different turn. At present, therefore, he had so little notion of going homeward, that he would rather have been sorry if Don Sylvio had hit upon that expedient. To say the truth, Pedrillo always trusted to the time present; his thoughts one way in the dark, and another in broad daylight; his ideas in a forest left him generally in the open plain, and his sentiments, while wallowing in a ditch, were prodigiously contrasted after a good breakfast. In this respect Pedrillo was another Seneca, and the difference between him and a philosopher consisted merely in his not giving himself the trouble, by force of reasoning, to form his contradictions into a system. Accordingly, he displayed all his rhetoric to prove to his master that there was no harm done yet. "Pimpimp," says he, "will find us again when we least expect him; leave him only to Madam Rademante; who knows what view she may have in letting him disappear? We must always hope for the best, signior; the bad comes soon enough of itself; and so let me tell you once for all, your friend the fairy, as a woman of honour, is bound to keep her word, and sooner or later we must have our princess, and then a fig for them all, say I."

This emphatical harangue a little soothed our disconsolate hero; and a fresh breeze just then coming from the sea and brushing through the wood, so tempered the sultry air that they resolved to continue their journey for some time, under the pleasant shade of the surrounding trees.

CHAPTER VIII

WEARIED IN PURSUIT OF THE BLUE BUTTERFLY, DON SYLVIO FALLS ASLEEP, AFTER TAKING A RURAL REPAST

OUR hero, having no other end in this wonderful excursion than that of catching the blue butterfly, it will easily be imagined that almost every butterfly he met with on the road drew his attention.

One would have thought, as Pedrillo himself remarked, that the fairies Fanfreluche and Carabossa had given the signal for all the butterflies in the universe to assemble and disperse themselves in this same wood. From every bush there issued dozens of them, and our knight, every moment thinking he saw his princess, took a fancy not to rest till he had caught it. Pedrillo followed him, with a pox! and a plague! at ever step, but all in vain; nothing would do but to accompany his zealous master.

At length, however, after having coursed it like mad folks for two hours, and fatigued themselves till they could hold out no longer, they discovered that these cursed butterflies had been only laughing at them. They had, indeed, already a quantity sufficient for a complete cabinet collection of yellows, reds, greys, flame-coloured, pinked, spotted, variegated, streaked, and peacock-eyed butterflies: in a word, butterflies of every colour and of every kind, but no one that spoke, or was a princess.

"Signior Don Sylvio," at last exclaimed Pedrillo, quite out of breath, and throwing himself at the foot of a tree, "I can run no longer; I wish the devil had

all the butterflies excepting your princess, and then we might have some hopes of finding her; for to tell you a bit of my mind, if Madam Rademante does not help us better than she has done yet, I'll fairly give up the chase."

"Pedrillo, my friend," replied Don Sylvio, half stifled for want of respiration, "I am so tired that I can hardly stir me: look, I beseech thee, and see for some convenient spot where we may rest ourselves; I'll tell thee my thoughts when I have more power and breath to speak."

"Then only go a few steps farther, if you please," said Pedrillo, "unless you have not strength enough left to walk thither; I see there's a fine spot upon the turf there behind those olive trees, you may look all the country round and not find so clever a resting-place."

'Twas, a spot indeed, even more beautifully situated than it seemed at a distance to promise; for on one side it was surrounded with hedges of white and yellow roses that formed a kind of natural alcove, and where it stood open you were presented with the view of meadows bespangled with flowers and intersected by a hundred little serpentine rivulets, whose borders, enriched with fruit-trees on both sides, exhibited to the enchanted eye a paradise in miniature.

"What a charming scene," cried Don Sylvio, recovering spirits at sight of this elegant enclosure; "one would think some nymph or fairy had this moment produced it on purpose for our reception. But if thou lovest me, go and get me a bottle of water from the rivulet that runs between those rose-bushes, for I am excessively dry and weary." So saying, he threw himself upon the green turf, whose tender verdure afforded him a softer couch than down or velvet.

Pedrillo returned in a minute with his bottle. "Animo! Signior Don Sylvio," cried he, "see, here's



water in abundance, and what is better still, there are two more bottles of Malaga wine left in my wallet. We shall drink them with so much the better *goût*, as they have cost us more time to get at. Come, come! here's to our princess's health. 'Medlars grow ripe with time and straw.' Courage, signior; there's no harm done yet; 'tis not four-and-twenty hours since we set out, perhaps it would be better for us not to make so much haste. Deuce take it, we know what women are made of. I'll lay you a wager, if we were to go on quietly, eating and drinking well, and make as if we thought nothing about her, she'd come presently of her own accord and put us in spirits again, just like that shepherdess, who, to fly from her beloved shepherd, went and hid herself in a cave. Who the devil is to be a greater gainer by the bargain than herself? Do you suppose then, that she would rather continue a poor blue butterfly than to be a princess, and your wife to boot? Let them believe it that will! So that you see there's no harm done yet, and therefore, let's be gay while we may, in spite of all the cursed Carabossas. Come, come! Signior Don Sylvio, 'tis eating and drinking that keeps life and soul together; let us eat then and be thankful: who knows but we may dine with our princess to-morrow in a castle of alabaster, and have our table served up in dishes made out of a rainbow?"

This fine exhortation of Pedrillo's was so powerfully supported by the example he set, and by our hero's being pretty hungry, that, if we may be allowed to make use of a Jansenistical expression, it was of necessity attended with an irresistible effect.

Don Sylvio on this occasion experienced the justness of that remark of the sage Zoroaster, who, in one of his books, now lost, asserts that a pound of white bread, a cold pie, and a bottle of Malaga wine, to a person of a good appetite, and who has not eaten for some time, are an infallible remedy against all sorts of vexation. The courage of our hero increased



therefore, in proportion as the volume of pie and quantity of wine diminished. The vivid spirits of the wine in a short time dissipated the black vapours which had overclouded his brain, and by degrees, pleasant ideas, smiling prospects, and soothing reveries succeeded; insomuch, that at length the god Morpheus took possession of his senses without the least occasion for a grain of poppy; and after having stetched him along in a gentle slumber upon the verdant grass, gave order to the zephyrs to perfume him, from time to time, with a delicious odour of roses.

Pedrillo followed his master's example, after taking the precaution to place his person and his dear knapsack behind a bush, at least thirty paces from his master, where he judged himself in safety.

Our readers, probably from the narcotic virtue of our narrative, may find themselves in the same situation with our travellers. That we may not therefore hinder them from keeping these sleepers company, if they chose, we shall here make a short pause, and take breath f r the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER IX

THE PRETTIEST ADVENTURE OF THIS BOOK

PEDRILLO waked after a nap of about two or three hours; when, finding himself perfectly refreshed, he arose, quitted his couch, and went to see what was become of his master. But how great was his astonishment at the sight of certain personages who presented themselves to him on his nearer approach! A prude, who, sleeping in a verdant arbour, tastes those pleasures in her dream which waking she contemns, could not be more astonished on rousing from her slumbers, to find herself in a bold lover's arms, than was Pedrillo, at sight of two young ladies, who, being partly concealed by the rose-bushes, stood near his master, and seemed to behold him with the most attentive contemplation.

They were both of them habited like shepherdesses, both of them seemingly about sixteen or seventeen years of age, and both of them so beautiful, that Pedrillo was for a moment in doubt whether they might not possibly be some of those nymphs or sylphids that usually appeared in vision to his master. "Am I dreaming," said he to himself, "or do I fancy myself awake, or do I see with my own eyes? Oh, we'll know that presently; 'tis only pinching my cheeks or arms. Ay, ay, 'tis all right, I am myself, I'm sure; 'tis so. Yes, yes, they are my own eyes too; let me rub 'em as long as I will they still show me the same two beautiful creatures, if such they be. But I could almost fancy they are fairies, and the finest, too, that a man shall see in a summer's day."

Upon this he began to stare at them anew, with



open eyes and wide gaping mouth, and knew not when to leave off. The more he surveyed them, the more was he confirmed in the opinion, that in the whole course of his life he had never met with anything so fine.

One of the two was taller and more genteel than the other; she appeared to be not above seventeen, or between that and eighteen years old; was dressed all in white, and instead of natural flowers, wore small ones in her hair composed of diamonds. The splendour of her jewels, however, was effaced by the lustre of her eyes, while the whiteness of her neck and arms surpassed that of her dress.

Pedrillo, dazzled with so much finery, no longer hesitated to conclude that it must be the fairy Radiante herself, and what confirmed him in the idea was to see two pages a little way off so smartly decked out and shining in silver that he could not fail taking them for salamanders. At that instant, all the little doubts, which from time to time had arisen in his mind concerning the real existence of fairies, and of course, their whole history, disappeared. Nothing now was more certain to his imagination than the existence of a butterfly-princess; and the fairy's appearance (upon which, as he firmly believed, the unravelling of this romance totally depended), was a full conviction to him that his young master would soon be triumphant over all the dwarfs and dwarfesses in the world, and at length become the happiest prince upon earth.

Full of these flattering ideas, he approached them, through trembling, and perceiving that they talked to each other, he stopped short close beside them, concealed by a bush, and holding his breath, listened to them with great attention—with the curiosity indeed of a young Faunus, who privately descries two nymphs busied in fixing upon the spot where they intend to bathe themselves the night following.

"You must confess," said the shortest of the two, who was a pretty brunette, and made poor Pedrillo's heart leap and rattle about at a strange rate as she spoke; "you must confess you cannot behold this young man without being moved. How handsome he is! what beautiful ringlets of hair! what a charming countenance! what a mixture of rose and lily! upon my honour, I don't think Endymion was so pretty as this young sleeper. Could not you be tempted, madam, and don't you feel some little inkling of a desire to be his Diana?"

"Why, surely thou art mad," replied the pretended fairy, "what an idea is that!—and yet I own to thee, Laura, he is really handsome. But what if he should wake? Our best step will be to get away."

"You are right, madam," said the short one, with a malicious, saucy look, "for what business have we here? You know, he may wake every minute, and what will he think to see us standing here, and as busy in looking at him as if we had never seen a pretty, rosy-faced young lad in our lives before."

"But still, I could wish to know who and what he is," answered the fairy. "His figure and garb bespeak him something above the common run——"

"Oh yes, I warrant you," said the nymph; "if a Carmelite sister was in our place, and had found him at the foot of this rose-bush, as we have, she'd at least have taken him for a little Saint John the Baptist, unless, indeed, she had supposed him a little angel."

"But who can he be, then? I don't know in all this neighbourhood——"

"Very true, madam; you have been here almost a month, and your antipathy to these rustic gentry has not yet allowed you to make any acquaintance among them; excepting the licentiate, Don Gabriel, whom you knew before at Valencia, and my lord, your brother. You converse with none, I believe,



but the nightingales in your park, and the lambs in your fields."

"Don't talk so loud," said the lady, "I am afraid every minute of his waking, and I would not for all the world he should see us. But tell me, Laura, can you conceive what can have brought hither a young man all alone, that seems to be of some distinction?"

"He is not so much alone as you may think him, fair ladies," cried Pedrillo, who could no longer contain himself, when he found that the fairy was a dame of fashion, and the nymph a kind of waiting-woman.

The little terror into which this salute threw our belles, not seeing at first from whence it came, soon disappeared upon their discovering Pedrillo, who, in spite of his unsplendid equipage, was a lad of a happy physiognomy, and sufficiently well shaped to have tempted a much more prudish girl than the fair Laura seemed to be.

"I see," continued he, "you are very curious to know what kind of a bird is this same young master of mine—he that you see sleeping there: but you must give me leave to be silent on that head, for 'tis of no small consequence to us to keep a certain old aunt of ours from knowing what is become of us. There is some mystery in the case, mind me; and yet, to such handsome young ladies as you are, if you'll promise to keep the secret, I think I might very well open the budget; for, upon my conscience, you neither look like nieces nor aunts of the fairy Fanfreluche."

"Please to explain yourself a little, my friend," said Laura, accompanying her words with a look that Pedrillo did not suffer to pass unnoticed, "but be quick, or we shall be afraid of waking your master."

"Oh, don't let that trouble you," replied Pedrillo; "he did not close his eyes all last night, and when he is once got asleep, the sky might fall without waking him. He sleeps now from downright weariness, for



only since yesterday evening we have travelled at least four-and-twenty leagues."

"Four-and-twenty leagues! and afoot too!" cried Laura, seemingly astonished.

"My pretty young lady," said Pedrillo, "one travels very fast when fairies are one's guides. You go off without knowing how, and have frequently got to the distance of some thousands of leagues, before you can perceive you have changed your place."

"Indeed!" cried Laura. "But pray, what do you mean by having fairy guides?"

"Why, faith, miss, that's a puzzling kind of a question which cannot be answered in a moment; but to make it short, between you and me, we are seeking out after a princess, or more properly speaking, a butterfly, that my master is in love with; and when we have found her, my master is to change her into a princess and marry her. This is the whole affair, look ye; but pray be silent about it, I beg of you. We must be upon our guard against certain dwarfs that fancy they have pretensions to our princess, and might knock our scheme at head perhaps, if they had the least notion of what we are about."

"Well now, madam," said Laura, turning to her mistress, "what do you say to this? Did you ever hear anyhing like it before? 'Twould puzzle a conjuror to strike out a fancy half so extravagant."

"But who then is thy master?" demanded the lady.

"Oh, as to my master, madam, he is certainly one of the best, and the most generous, and good-natured—in short, madam, he is one of the learnedest and bravest noblemen you shall meet with in all Spain, take my word for it; and I think I ought to know him, for I was brought up with him, and what is more still, he and I are foster-brothers."

"Very well," interrupted the lady, "but I only want to know his name; who do you call him?"

"His name, madam," said Pedrillo, "is Don Sylvio de Rosalva, at your service; his castle is but three little leagues from Xelva. He is Don Sylvio, as I said before, and his father's name was Don Pedro de Rosalva; he was one of my godfathers, and for that reason they gave me the name of Pedro; but when I was only a little one, they called me nothing but Pedrillo, and so they do still to this hour, and Pedrillo I will be so long as it pleases God, unless my master soon finds out his princess; and then, indeed, I can't tell what may happen; perhaps I may then get at some one of the marquisates or countyships that the princess is to bring my master as her marriage portion."

Pedrillo spoke this with so very grave and ingenuous an air, that our fair visitants no longer hesitated to conclude both him and his master were a little touched in the head. "Why, this is more than Don Quixote himself!" cries Laura to her mistress: "the master in love with a butterfly, and the man looking out for nothing less than a marquisate: well, this will make us fine diversion. But here, hark ye, my friend, you told us just now about a butterfly your master was in love with, and that he was to change it into a princess; perhaps you meant to say that he is in love with a princess changed into a butterfly by some enchanter?"

"You have it, you have it," said Pedrillo; "that's the very case, and the business now is to turn her back again into a princess. But to tell you the truth, and between ourselves, methinks the fairy Rademante, who promised my master her production, has not quite taken all the care of us she might have done, and I must own I cannot help being in doubt as to the upshot of the matter."

"But what fairy is it?" demanded Laura; "Rademante, did you say?"

"Pshaw! let her be called what she will," interrupted the lady, with an air of chagrin, "we have

no time for troubling ourselves about fairies and butterflies; 'twill be night before we get to Lirias. What will my brother think of our staying out so long?"

At these words the lady departed, first casting a look at the handsome sleeper; a look, which, had she been alone, might possibly have been changed into a kiss; at least, this was one of Laura's shrewd reflections to herself by the way.

Pedrillo thought it his duty to escort his pretty visitors to the high-road, where they had left their mules in the hands of their pages. But not to dissemble the truth, his heart had a greater share in the step than his politeness. Little Laura, in a few moments, had effected a change, which Mrs Beatrice had been labouring at for some years with very small success. In short, he was as much in love as any Pedrillo ever was. He seemed to have a thousand things still to say to his fair unknown, but he had so many more at his heart, as hindered him from uttering a single word. Thus he stood like one fixed to the place for a good while after the ladies had disappeared, and still kept looking on towards the spot at which he had lost sight of them.

CHAPTER X

SHOWING WHO THE LADIES WERE THAT PEDRILLO TOOK FOR FAIRIES

INSTANTANEOUSLY, or to speak more properly, from the moment that the chaste Laura first cast her smiles on Pedrillo, he was no longer of that rank of beings which could justly be expected to enjoy such presence of mind as commonly distinguishes persons of a cold and phlegmatic constitution. He had now for some time lost sight of the two ladies who had appeared to him in the preceding chapter, before he recollected that possibly it might have been very proper to have informed himself, both who they were, and where they might again be met with.

However, as it would be doing our readers injustice to keep them in suspense by the amorous distractions of Pedrillo, we think ourselves obliged to satisfy their curiosity; which we flatter ourselves to have excited in them, without our having used any of that mysterious parade, commonly employed by writers of romance, to keep the mind upon the stretch for whole chapters together, about such or such a person, with whom they have scraped acquaintance, whether at an ordinary, or in a stage coach. We will therefore discover to them under the seal of secrecy—for Don Sylvio must still remain ignorant of the matter—both who the ladies were, and by what chance they came to the place; where, unhappily for the repose of their hearts, they found the beautiful Don Sylvio sleeping, and his faithful Achates awake.

She then, whom Pedrillo, on account of her figure

and jewels, took for a fairy, was named Donna Felicia de Cardena: she was something about eighteen years of age, the relict of Don Miguel de Cardena, who had been so discreet as to die at threescore and ten, after a marriage of about two years, leaving his widow sole heiress of an immense fortune which he had been labouring the greatest part of his life to acquire in Mexico.

Ever since their marriage they had resided at Valencia, a city which, for its beauty and fine situation, is called by the Spaniards, "The Fair." But as soon as Donna Felicia saw herself mistress of her fate by the death of her old man, she determined in favour of a country life, where she had more opportunity to pursue a certain romantic turn, both of heart and imagination.

The poets, it seems, had made nearly the same impression upon her mind as the fairy tales had done upon Don Sylvio's. If the latter had his imagination stuffed up with metamorphoses, enchantments, princesses, hobgoblins, dwarfs, and so on, that of the former was equally so with poetic pictures, Arcadian shepherds, and love adventures. Hence, if she threw herself into the arms of a lover so frigid and so unpoetical as a husband must be at the age of seventy, it was merely from the hope and expectation of soon coming to the disposal of his riches, which might enable her to realise all those brilliant schemes of a free and happy mode of life, which she had eagerly formed upon her poetic ideas.

Donna Felicia, exclusive of a singular share of beauty, possessed all those charms which at once supply the place of female beauty, and render that beauty irresistible. She played upon the lute, and sung to it in the highest perfection, and what made it still more charming, there was that something in the bare sound of her voice so affectingly sonorous, as, according to good old King Lear's opinion, is an excellent thing in woman. She was moreover skilled



in drawing and crayon-painting; and, that no gift or excellence might be wanting, she composed sonnets, idylliums, and little madrigals, which, if you'll take the word of her lovers for it, surpassed all the productions of the Sapphos, Corinnas, and Nine Muses put together.

It may be easily imagined, then, what a revolution the death of her husband must have occasioned in the polite circle of Valencia. All the ladies trembled for the fidelity of their lovers, and every fop prepared himself for making so brilliant a conquest. The poets laid in a large stock of odes and elegies, in hopes of selling them at a moderate price to the young widow's admirers. In a word, everybody was in motion, herself excepted, who was the object of so much bustle and so many schemes. When lo! scarce had her mourning and the winter elapsed, but she quitted the town, totally unconcerned at the deplorable situation into which her cruel resolution had plunged her adorers; retiring with her brother to his fine estate at Lirias, seated in one of the pleasantest countries in the world.

This retreat she chose principally out of civility to her brother, Don Eugene de Lyrias, whom she tenderly loved. She had a noble mansion of her own, which Don Miguel, at her instance, had purchased in the neighbourhood of Xelva, but she thought it more suitable to live under her brother's eye, both as being her nearest relation, and a young nobleman of high character and distinguished merit.

At her own seat Donna Felicia had formed a kind of pastoral scene, which in time she thought of making another Arcadia. Thither she every now and then took a little excursion, and it was just on her return from one of this sort, that she had discovered the rose-bush under the shade of which Don Sylvio lay sleeping. The place appeared to her so enchantingly fine, that she alighted from her mule to pluck a few roses, of which she was very fond, as all

poetic souls generally are; and hence she met with that unexpected surprise of seeing our handsome cavalier fast asleep.

Let the word sympathy appear to the ears of many of our modern sages as poetical, mysterious, and magical as they please, we are ignorant of any other to express a certain kind of affection, which we—that is to say, all the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve—feel at first sight for persons unknown: an affection that is so visibly distinguished from all other kinds of inclination, friendship, and love, no less in its cause, than by its effects.

For instance, there were above fifty of the most engaging young sparks in Valencia, who took all imaginable pains to touch the heart of this beautiful Felicia, without being able to determine her in giving a preference to any of them, in comparison with the riches of old Don Miguel. Some of her adorers had real merit; Donna Felicia did them all perfect justice. She esteemed them, liked their company, honoured them with her friendship, and perhaps—for the reader will be kind enough to note it is only a perhaps—she might have been capable of entertaining even some certain weakness, in certain circumstances, under a certain sign of the Zodiac, or the direction of a certain wind, in a certain place, at a certain hour, and in certain dispositions, towards some one amongst them, who should have more experience than Madam de Lisban's little Abbé. For, with our fair countrywomen's leave, according to the sage Avicenne's idea, and, we may add, that of the Reverend Father Escobar, in his moral theology, "There are certain moments in which virtue is very fortunately seconded by a lucky chance." But none of these same young gentlemen could succeed, nor might they have succeeded in a longer series of years than the Celadons of the Astrea spent dying at the feet of their unfeeling goddesses. None could inspire her with that inexplicable, that extraordinary



sentiment, which Don Sylvio, without knowing it, or contributing to it, had enkindled in her even at the first sight, and which had told her more in the tenth part of a minute than ever her heart had told her respecting all her admirers. In short, a sentiment which might have made her clearly comprehend, if the ecstatic condition in which she stood had allowed her a moment's self-examination, that she was capable of sacrificing with pleasure, to this young man unknown, all those riches for which she herself had sacrificed the best days of the most amiable young lady in Valencia.

To examine what could properly be the cause of so singular an effect, as well as of all those by which love sympathetic distinguishes itself from the other kinds of love, would carry us too far from our narrative: the reader has our permission to adopt any hypothesis that to his own mind shall appear most suitable. Whether then it be, that the souls of these sympathising creatures have mutually known and loved each other in a state anterior to this, or whether there be any natural kindred in souls, or whether there be any sister souls, as an English poet calls them, or whether their genii carry on a certain reciprocal correspondence, or whether some musical harmony produces this effect mechanically upon their fibres and finer nerves—'tis enough, that this same sympathy does as truly exist in nature, as either gravity, attraction, elasticity, or magnetic power, and that, all circumstances duly weighed, the beautiful Donna Felicia, impelled by the magic influence of this mysterious attraction, is as little to blame for not having been able to defend herself against something in favour of our hero, which till now she had never felt for any one, as one Regulo Vasconi, according to Scaliger's account, is blamable for not having been able to retain his water on hearing the sound of a bagpipe.*

* See Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, Act IV. Sc. 1.

It is not without good reason that we have availed ourselves of this ignoble comparison, though we were greatly afraid of its shocking the delicacy of our prudish readers; since in case any future commentators should entertain a curiosity to guess at our real sentiments touching sympathy, this will serve their turn, and help to throw light upon the subject. At present, without dwelling any longer upon such intricate matters, we shall return to our two ladies, whom, if we remember right, we left on the road in their return to Lirias.

CHAPTER XI

ONE OF THE MOST LEARNED CHAPTERS IN THIS WHOLE PERFORMANCE

TASTE, in matters of love, is so various in this world, that we might possibly meet with readers who would sooner declare for Laura, though only a beauty of the second order, or to express ourselves more learnedly, a *dea minorum gentium*, than even for her mistress herself. If there be any of this sort of lovers, they might probably be a little angry with us if we did not communicate to them, at least, an abstract of the fair Laura's history. All such we entreat to bear in mind that we have already said everything necessary respecting her, by saying that she was a pretty little brown girl, genteel, smart, and very lively; and these, we humbly conceive, are the most remarkable circumstances that we could have urged in her favour. For, as to her history, every one knows she was a chamber-maid, or waiting-woman, and the history of waiting-women, as everybody knows, is the same throughout the world, or at least according to the common course of nature.

The famous father Sanchez, in his book entitled *De Matrimonio*, which is equally chaste and instructive, observes, that a growing love operates upon a young widow in a different manner to what it does upon a young girl. "The former," says he, "in consequence of it, becomes gay, alert, and petulant; whereas in the other we observe an inward stupefaction, and a gloomy melancholy, which," adds this excellent man, "are the effects of that inward secret horror, which the soul feels at the danger it incurs on plunging from its glorious and angelic state, into that gross and material passion,

which, in its consequences, leads us on to so indecent an incorporation as that whereby the world is populated and filled with sins."

We have too profound a respect for the Holy Inquisition to dare to accuse so great a man even of the slightest error: we shall therefore only say that nature was greatly to blame for having dared, without the least regard to this great man's authority, who hath invented so large a catalogue of new sins, to operate in the beautiful Felicia and her confidante, precisely contrary to this great casuist's remarks; for however contradictory it might appear, it is nevertheless strictly true, and we cannot deny it, that on their way to Lirias our young widow was perfectly stupefied and silent, while the lass, her companion, notwithstanding the danger at which her virgin soul ought to have trembled, was so gay, and in so good a humour, that the most seraphic sister of Saint Claire might have been tempted to a wish of being in her place. They had already got a good way on the road, without Donna Felicia's once opening her lips, though Laura waited for the signal with great impatience, to give a scope to her sallies. It is true, a sigh did, as it were by chance, escape the lady; but it was only a mere fragment of a sigh, for she caught it back again just in time to hinder the transportation of at least two-thirds of it from escaping her discreet bosom.

At last Laura, who, for a waiting-woman, had observed a very great and extraordinary silence, could contain herself no longer. She began with one question, which was presently followed by another; so that at length a conversation insensibly sprung up betwixt her and her mistress or friend—call her which you will, for she was both. We shall not fail to communicate this conversation to our honoured and gentle readers, word for word, just as Pedrillo assures us he learned it afterwards from the coral lips of his dear nymph herself.



CHAPTER XII

A FEMALE DIALOGUE

"You are prodigiously grave, madam."

"Grave, Laura!"

"Yes, madam, if you please; nay, and even almost melancholy too, if so sad a word can suit a countenance, upon which even sadness itself would appear charming."

"I know not what thou art talking about; I think I am in as good spirits as I have been all day."

"Not quite in so good spirits, madam."

"And prithee why should not I?"

"I can't tell indeed, madam. But I thought just now I heard a little sigh——"

"A sigh!"

"Yes, madam; but one of those little sighs, one of that sort of sighs that escape from a girl of fourteen when a pretty young fellow demands her elder sister in marriage."

"Thou bringest very impertinent comparisons, Laura, and changest a mere breathing into a sigh, to enable thee to vent a joke that hast cost thee a quarter of an hour's meditation."

"I thank you for the compliment you have made my understanding; but since you are determined neither to seem grave, nor to allow it was a sigh—though by the way many objections might be made, we'll change the subject, if you choose."

"I am not at all disposed for talking this evening."

"That was a charming spot where you gathered those roses, madam; though to say the truth, for I

am no poet, they already begin to fade a little in your bosom. Indeed it was a charming spot ! "

" True, it was so."

" Yes, indeed, one of those sweet poetical spots that the books tell us of ; and I hope, madam, you'll never repent having set foot in it—notwithstanding that little Endymion we found sleeping there. Well, ma'am, you must own we never saw anything so handsome in Valencia."

" Why, thou talkest so briskly that 'twould almost make one think thou'rt in love with him."

" Perhaps, madam, you might rather have thought this of me, if I had said nothing about him ? "

" I comprehend thee, and thou shalt imagine what thou wilt and welcome. But I assure thee his beauty did not appear so supernatural to me as thou wouldst fain make me believe."

" Beauty, supernatural ! Indeed, I did not mean to say any such thing, for I know nothing about supernatural matters. But yet you must acknowledge, he is infinitely handsomer than Don Alexis, that very important gentleman at Valencia, whom the ladies cannot help wishing so impatiently for their admirer ; and whom none, except Donna Felicia de Cardena, does not pique herself upon having possessed for a few days together."

" Handsomer than Don Alexis is no such great matter. For my own part, I never took him for anything but a very insipid coxcomb, whose greatest merit consisted in having a fair, plump hand, and white teeth, not to mention his lisping out perpetually a vast quantity of silly jokes, and venting them with an air of mighty consequence."

" Nay, for that matter, I know not how it came into my head to mention Don Alexis, for indeed I never could conceive what the ladies found so very extraordinary in him. Let him look to it, if his ill luck should bring this Don Sylvio to Valencia, for in my opinion, he would scarce leave him merit



enough to seduce the poor heart even of a tender Abigail."

"I know not with what eyes thou hast looked upon this Don Sylvio; I grant he appears amiable, but as to being so handsome as thou sayest——"

"Well, madam, you have hit upon the right word—amiable; ay, that's the very word I meant to say; for indeed his beauty is not without defects—light hair——"

"What dost thou mean?—'tis of a chestnut colour."

"Ay, true, 'tis chestnut. But as he is so ruddy, and, as one might say, has so womanish a countenance, light hair in my mind——"

"And in my mind, Laura, Nature understands these assortments of colours better than thou. His hair suits the colour of his face perfectly well——"

"Well, but yet methinks he ought to have a more manly air. If one was to dress him like a woman, Donna Leonora de Zuniga herself, who knows men so well, might be deceived by him as soon as anybody, I'd answer for it."

"Why, certainly, he is not a Hercules; but notwithstanding the delicacy and regularity of his features, there seems something grand and heroic in his physiognomy, which one should think you might have observed, after so attentive an examination as you appear to have made of him."

"And yet, madam, I protest you seem to have observed this young man with more exactness in one moment, than I in a quarter of an hour. But what do you say to his mouth? I own it is pretty, only a little too small in my opinion——"

"Why, prithee now, Laura, what can be the reason of thy undervaluing everything in him that is particularly graceful?"

"I most humbly beg pardon, madam, for telling you things only just as they appear to me. But, if it was not for fear of displeasing you——"



"Displeasing *me*, sayest thou? Thou art a fool! But to say the truth, I am not much the wiser for lending an ear to thy follies. What is it to us whether Don Sylvio is handsome, or whether he is not?"

"True, madam; it is enough that he is amiable, that's the grand point. I remember to have read somewhere, that nothing appears handsome or beautiful to us, but what we love."

"If that be so, thou must surely be furiously taken with our unknown: for, by thy account, the Vatican Apollo himself cannot be a more perfect beauty than Don Sylvio."

"At least, madam, the latter has the advantage over the former of breathing, and that, in my mind, is no contemptible matter."

"Have done with this trifling. Tell me, Laura; thou rememberest what that Pedrillo, or what do you call it, told us about him?"

"If one may credit what that lad said, our unknown gentleman must be of a very good family, the son of Don Pedro de Rosalva, whom my lord, your late father, used often to speak of as an officer of great merit. But if I may give my opinion, I fancy Pedrillo may have said more than he will be able to prove."

"Possibly; externals may deceive, for these are in his favour. But prithee, what reasons hast thou——"

"Why, madam, if we believe this Pedrillo, and he seems to be a frank, open-hearted young fellow, in what he has said in favour of his master, we cannot then refuse to believe that Don Sylvio is in love with a butterfly, and has, God knows what—some dwarf for his rival: that a fairy protects him, and that by this same fairy's assistance, the butterfly is to be changed into a princess, and so forth. Now all this in my mind, is pretty much of the Bedlam stamp: and yet, what is still worse, the lad utters these idle stories with so simple and ingenuous an air, and such



an absolute appearance of sincerity, as leaves us no room to suppose or to hope that all he said was merely for our diversion, which renders the case so much the more desperate."

"I grant thee, Laura, and why should I make it a mystery to thee, that this young gentleman gives me some concern; for he must be out of his senses if what Pedrillo said be true."

"Yes, and Pedrillo himself must be much more so, for nobody can talk of the most common things with more calmness or indifference than he does of butterflies, dwarfs, fairies, princesses, and marquisates."

"Well, there is something very unaccountable in all this: however, from the man's confused account we may learn that Don Sylvio has taken his flight from home upon some love adventure. The lad mentioned an old aunt, who probably may have thrown some obstacles in the way of his amour, and perhaps that has turned his head; for, as everybody knows, a violent passion, if it be too indiscreetly opposed, may produce fatal effects."

"That is true, especially as nothing is more easy, say some folks, than to set reason at variance with love. But if we do not suppose this Pedrillo as crazy as his master, we have gained nothing by our argument. A droll thought, madam, just now strikes into my mind; let us adopt it for want of a better. There is something so melancholy in the idea of supposing an amiable young gentleman touched in his head, as might well deserve the sigh that escaped you a few minutes ago—for indeed, madam, you must not deny it—it was one of those sort of sighs that cannot be denied. I followed it from the birth, from the moment of its rising, by little and little, from your fair bosom, till at length it burst from your opening lips, and took its flight in the shape of a little amorous boy."

"Simpleton! But, pray, what idea was it thou meanest to tell me?"

"Oh, I was thinking that Don Sylvio, with your permission, might possibly be a little unsettled without being precisely what one may call crazy. In short, he might perhaps yield to some folly, extravagance, or what you please to term it, without its rendering him unworthy to appear amiable in the eyes of a lady who should have found him sleeping at the foot of so beautiful a rose-bush."

"Laura, I perceive thou hast taken it into thy head, and fully determined that I am in love with him. We shall not dispute upon that head, believe me: but I prithee tell me, in what dost thou think his extravagance consists?"

"I suppose he may be a Don Quixote in miniature, who, as Pedrillo expressed it, runs a-fairy hunting, just as the hero of *La Mancha* rambled after knight-errantry. And is it then so incomprehensible a thing for a lively young man—one that has never seen the world, and meets with nothing in his own village capable of gratifying the delicacy of his taste—to have become so frantic with reading romances and fairy tales, as to take all their enchanters, fairies, enchanted palaces, and dragons, together with the dwarfs and hobgoblins, and blue centaurs they speak of, for so many real beings?"

"'Twould be a very singular species of frenzy, Laura; and yet I could conceive it not impossible. But if so, what shall we say to his love for the princess that has been changed into a butterfly?"

"I could venture any wager, madam, that this same princess is neither more nor less than some smart country girl he has somewhere got sight of. His imagination has exalted her to the rank of a princess, and at length, with the assistance of a yellow dwarf, or some hunchbacked Magotine, has changed her into a butterfly. So that he will have nothing more to do, than see some young lady that may suit his fancy, to restore his well-beloved in a moment to her proper shape, without the help of a

talisman or enchanted ring: and thus, to speak in Pedrillo's style, she may presently be re-metamorphosed into a peasant lass, at least, if not into a princess."

"Well, Laura, I protest thou hast excited my curiosity; I am only sorry now, that we did not stop a little till he waked."

"Nay, madam, as to that, it will be no difficult matter to get such an account of him as may relieve us from our embarrassment, his place of residence being so near—only a few leagues from your brother's seat. And who knows but those same hobgoblins that are so interested in his destiny, may bring him as easily to Lirias as they conducted us this day to those rose-bushes, which, upon the word of a maid, perfectly resembled the enchanted groves of a fairy."

While Laura was going on with this striking harangue, they arrived at the courtyard of the castle of Lirias; where, for some time, we shall do ourselves the honour to take leave of them, and return to see what is become of our hero; a personage whom we cannot long lose sight of without being guilty of great neglect, though we can as little deny but the company of Donna Felicia has afforded us a most agreeable satisfaction.

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR DISPLAYS HIS PROFOUND SKILL IN THE MYSTERIES OF ONTOLOGY.

If ever man found himself in a critical situation, it was Pedrillo, after he had lost sight of the two fair creatures, to whose acquaintance we introduced him in the preceding book. The tumult which this apparition created, no less in his head than in his heart, was so great, that the bare difficulty of describing it throws us almost into the same dilemma. The question with him was, whether he had been awake or dreaming; whether the objects were fairies, or mere mortals; and whether they had vanished, or only taken leave in the ordinary course of things. But this was a great problem in his idea, and the more he thought of it the less was he able to resolve it. Meditations, indeed, are not everybody's business; at least, Pedrillo so ill applied himself to the work, as presently to be involved in the labyrinth of his own cogitations, which, like a net, only served to entangle him more and more. In short, after having battled with himself for above a quarter of an hour, he concluded with beginning in good earnest to doubt his own existence.

Of all the doubts to which man's poor and feeble reason is exposed, none can be found, perhaps, so little capable of being supported at the long run as this I have just mentioned. Hence poor Pedrillo soon fancied he saw himself incessantly turning

round upon his own axis, as quick as a silk-bobbin or a windmill's wing.

Some, perhaps, will tell us, that had he been Cartesian, he might have extricated himself from his doubts, by the famous "*Cogito, ergo sum.*" But in this poor lad's situation, Descartes himself might possibly have lost all his Latin: for, in fact, he thought nothing at all; and in this state, if he had even been capable of framing a syllogism, the Cartesian axiom would have served him to no other end than to precipitate him from his doubts of existence into the certainty of not existing; an event not much better than that of falling *ex Scylla in Charybdin*, or as the vulgar sometimes phrase it, "Out of the frying pan into the fire."

It must be confessed that crude genius in a state of nature, instinct, common sense, or what you please to call it (for we are not fond of cavilling about words), is often of more utility to the possessor than the subtlest wit, or the keenest penetration. Had Pedrillo been a metaphysician, he certainly would not have stopped at the doubt of his own existence. He would have gone on ruminating, reflecting, analysing, abstracting, distinguishing, and combining, till he had denied both his own, and the existence of all other things, and even the possibility that they should exist. And who knows, but at last he might have become the founder of a new sect of philosophers, of whom it might reasonably be conjectured, that from their singular facility at resolving the most difficult problems in physics and morals, without the least trouble, it must soon have swallowed up all the other sects of Dualists, Materialists, Pantheists, Idealists, Egotists, Platonics, Aristotelians, Stoics, Epicureans, Nominalists, Realists, Occamists, Abelardists, Averroists, Paracelsists, Machiavellans, Rosicrucians, Cartesians, Spinosists, Wolffians, and Crusians put together.

We cannot think, without horror and trembling, of the pernicious consequences which must have attended such a philosophy in the system of human society: it seeming to be an effect impossible, that the principle of non-existence should ever be reduced into a system in the least degree tolerable; there being no known religion, no established laws or customs, in any polite nation whatsoever, that can possibly have assorted with such a system. For with what appearance of right could it be demanded of a man who does not exist, to pay tithes, offerings, and what are called *Jura stolæ*? or how should it be possible to convict any one of a crime, who, by a long geometrical demonstration, should prove to his judge, that he, the accused, did not, nor could have existed at the time in which he is charged with having done such or such things.

But, happily for the public repose, Pedrillo had not the least disposition for speculative philosophy; on the contrary, instead of long ratiocination upon the perplexing situation in which he now stood, he had nothing so much at heart, as to free himself from it in the speediest manner. He imagined that his master, who had slept all this while, and consequently must be supposed very impartial, would be the most likely person to free him from so uneasy a predicament,

We shall not enquire whether Pedrillo reasoned justly in this matter, or how far he did so, since a particular examination would infallibly involve us in that famous dispute, concerning what is termed *intellectum agentem et patientem*: to which we feel ourselves so much the less disposed at this present writing, as the superlatively-learned subject of the foregoing chapter hath so weakened our brain, that we find it indispensably necessary, with the kind reader's permission, to make some little pause.

CHAPTER II

AN INSTANCE THAT OCULAR TESTIMONY IS NOT ALWAYS SO CERTAIN AS TO BE THE MOST CREDIBLE.

PEDRILLO presently waked his master, but, unfortunately, in the very moment that the latter was engaged in one of the finest dreams that ever Platonic lover enjoyed, or the lover of a butterfly could wish for.

"Wretch!" cried Don Sylvio as he awaked, "from what a dream hast thou disturbed me!"

"Pox take it, Signior Don Sylvio!" said Pedrillo, "what have we to do with dreams now? There are very different things upon the carpet. But I beg of you, my dear master, if you have a drop of charity left for poor Pedrillo, only tell me whether I am Pedrillo still, or not? for i' faith, everything is not as it should be—and let me be burnt, if I should have believed my own mother at the time, if she had come and told me I was my father's son."

"What the devil is the matter with thee?" replied Don Sylvio, greatly surprised at his discourse. "What hast thou to believe that thou art any other than thy own self?"

"Nay, now, only do but tell me whether I am myself," said Pedrillo, "and reasons shall follow in time and place. Let us first determine the principal point. Only be so kind as to answer me my questions offhand; for you will find it's a matter of more consequence than you may think."

"Poor simpleton!" cried Don Sylvio, smiling;

"thou hast been Pedrillo for these twenty years, and why shouldst thou not be so now?"

"Look at me, signior, contemplate me before and behind, and then tell me the truth, upon the faith of a gentleman."

"Why then, as truly as that I am a gentleman," said Don Sylvio, "thou art Pedrillo, or thou art an ass: one of the two is certain——"

"An ass! Stay, signior, here's my ears; methinks you may find longer ones under many a doctor's cap; and if I am but as certainly Pedrillo as I am not a doctor—an ass, I would say—everything goes as it should: for, to tell you the truth, signior, I, myself, had some kind of forethought, something of a reprehension, that the thing could not be otherwise than you have just now assured me: but when things happen to anybody so out of the way, 'tis not to be wondered, if one even forgot one's own name."

"And prithee, what has happened to thee?" demanded Don Sylvio. "Tell me in few words, if you please?"

"Signior," said Pedrillo, "there's no telling the whole in a moment. A wise man may put as many questions in a breath as a fool cannot answer in a whole day. If you'll but give me time, I'll tell you it all to the least syllable. For, look ye, upon my faith, it's just as if I saw her still before my eyes, with those large brown eyes, and that charming roguish look and smile she gave me, as she mounted upon her mule. Let me die if it was not just for all the world, as if she was drawing my heart with a pack-thread. You may laugh at me, signior, but I'm as great a knave as ever breathed, if I did not look with an eye of envy at the mule that carried her."

"No longer abuse my patience," cried Don Sylvio, who could not comprehend a word of all this medley harangue; "tell me plainly, and in proper

order, what has happened to thee, while I was asleep?"

"Well, signior, that I will, provided you have but patience enough to hear me: for, as I told you, I have so much to say, that I know not where to begin, though I am filled ready to burst with it, and wish I could speak it all in a breath. But since you choose to have me relate the thing in proper order, be pleased to know, signior, it was not long after you fell asleep that I begun to gape and yawn too, and did so two or three times together, and so went on, till I was afraid of doing nothing else the whole evening. However, I judged by that, I had some need of sleep; but, as I had determined to keep watch and take care of you, I beat it off as much as possibly I could; and, to keep myself awake, I drank two or three sups out of the bottle; it might be four—for I don't exactly call to mind. In short, the bottle was at last empty, and I was not a bit more in spirits than before. My eyelids shut up all in a moment, and then I yawned again; and I kept on a good while holding an argument between sleep and myself——"

"Oh, the devil!" exclaimed Don Sylvio, "if thou continuest talking at this rate thy life and mine would not be sufficient to see thee at the end of thy story. So then, thou hast been asleep?" "Good." —"And then waked?" "True."—"Or did these marvellous affairs thou wished'st to tell me, appear to thee in a dream?"

"In a dream! no, truly, signior, when I saw this apparition I was quite broad awake, as I should have told you, if you had let me go on without interrupting me: for if you will have me relate things in order, I must let them follow one after another."

"Undoubtedly," said Don Sylvio; "but is it necessary, then, that thou shouldst mention every uninteresting circumstance, and make the tale as

heavy and tedious as an old nurse's story? Thou hast been asleep, and thou hast waked: this is the whole mystery, and thou might'st have said it all in two words.—Well, go on——"

"Oh, the vengeance! how would you have me go on, when you are every moment making me lose the thread of my story; and then you would have me find it again in a trice—whereabouts was I—ay—well: when I fell asleep."

"But you was already got awake."

"Ay, but however, one must go to sleep before one can wake? But be that as it may, or as you please; I then got awake, as you was saying; though, to say the truth, I think it's very likely I might have slept till this time, if a certain necessity—a certain—I don't know how to name it, so as to speak with common decency: but, 'A word to the wise is enough,' says the proverb. In short, a certain want which one cannot well get supplied by proxy.—You understand me now, I hope?——"

"Pshaw! yes, I do; prithee get on with thy story, Pedrillo, and come to the point."

"There is a time for all things, says Solomon. In one word, then, it was a something that the Corregidor of Xelva, as well as the king himself, are obliged to do just in the same way as the poorest country clown—yes, truly. I have often had it in my head, that if the great lords and ladies would but think seriously of the matter—and it's no such very head-breaking business—it would cut down a vast deal of their pride and haughtiness; as if they valued themselves infinitely more than poor common people. If, for example, they did but think—I cannot tell it out of respect to your worship; and yet 'tis very true, that they neither make amber nor musk; and if you consider it closely——"

"O brave Pedrillo!" cried Don Sylvio, laughing; "if once thou settest about moralising, thou wilt

never have done. Good, now, do pass over the fine things that have jumped into thy brain, and leave this doing thy affairs—— "

"Well, there now, your worship has said it at once, and has hardly left it a covering. For my own part, I could never have dared to speak it out so plainly: but as it is done, I'll tell you without any further preamble or circumround-about, that after having assisted nature, which, by the way, was behind a bush, fifty or sixty paces at least from the spot where you was laid down——"

"My friend Pedrillo," interrupted Don Sylvio, "I see thou art disposed to harrass and tease me. But go on in your own way; since it must be my fate to become the martyr of thy stunning tittle-tattle, I shall endeavour to bear with it as long as my patience will let me."

"Signior," replied Pedrillo, "I should be very sorry to abuse your patience; but you see how the matter stands: we must go on from one word to another; people often begin with a goose quill, and end with the Angel Gabriel,* and I could not find in my heart, especially to pass over this circumstance, without speaking of it, by reason of what follows; since by that you may see, I was certainly awake, and had the perfect use of my senses; but we won't fall out about it; for, as I am now coming to the main point, I shall be pretty brief."

"Wonderful, Pedrillo! No more excuses, I beg of thee."

"Know then, my dear master, that on my coming back from behind my bush, and wanting to know how you did, I saw — guess, signior, what I saw?"

"Why, thou lookedst into some rivulet, and there didst thou see the most silly, and the most stupid, the most impudent, tiresome, and insipid ass, that

* This proverbial expression seems to refer to a sort of diversion, similar to the English "Royal Game of the Goose."

ever walked on two feet since the time of Balaam. Is not it so?"

"Nay, signior, you are not right there; but I'll be hanged if you won't guess it immediately, when I have told you that—that I saw a fairy; ay, and more than a fairy—let me tell you. For surely, 'twas the most beautiful fairy that a man shall see in a summer's day; and, if 'twas not the fairy Rademante herself, I'm positive she was handsomer than all your Bellinas, and Charmantas, and Amarantas, and Rademantes, put together."

"A fairy! sayst thou? And how didst thou know it was one?"

"How did I know! Deuce take it, signior, do you suppose then that I know nothing at all? Have I been all this while in your service, and can't I tell what a fairy is? If this was not one, mind me, say that Pedrillo is a blockhead, that deserves to be tossed in a blanket. I tell you, signior, her countenance sparkled as if it had been all cut out of a single diamond. For three or four leagues about her there was a bright light, as if half a dozen suns were shining all together—and if this was not a fairy, you would do mighty well to throw all your fairy-tales into the fire, and swear boldly that there never was, nor never will be a fairy, while there have been, or shall be any people, who have eaten, or shall eat their soup with a spoon, as long as it pleases God."

"Well, but where didst thou see the fairy, and what did she do?"

"What did she do? Deuce take it! she did nothing but keep looking at you: you cannot think how she looked at you: 'twas just as if she could never look at you enough. She stood close beside you, and then she stooped down, and then again she began looking at you afresh, that 'twas quite a charm to behold her."

"Was she alone?"

"Oho! that's the principal affair: had she been alone, I should not have talked so much about her; but she had another little fairy, or a nymph, or a sylphid with her—call her what you please—and 'twas certainly the prettiest little creature you ever saw in your life."

"But how did she look?—Give me a description of her, perhaps I may guess who she was."

"Why, as I told you, signior, she was a genteel little creature, with hair as black as a crow——"

"I ask thee," said Don Sylvio, "what sort of air had the fairy?"

"She was, as I told you before, very genteel; neither too plump nor too thin, but as fresh and as full of juice as a morning rose. Her face was of a cherry red, and such a neck, such arms—I cannot tell you how I felt. But I assure you Mrs Beatrice is a mere dowdy in comparison with her. I was quite ashamed at having been so stupid as to amuse myself with such an ugly old baggage; but one can't think of everything. If I could but have foreseen this——"

"I want thee to inform me of the fairy, and thou only keepest bothering me and prating about her attendant."

"Well, signior, and what, forsooth, would you have me tell you more? She did not give me time to look much at the other? Oh, I wish you had but seen her? O' my conscience, I could have stood looking and wondering at her all day, without ever being tired."

"Well, well, but what of the fairy?"

"The fairy? Why, as to the fairy, she stood there, as I told you, and kept continually looking at you, that's all I can tell you about her. For, as I said just now, that little creature was always in motion, and every moment I discovered something in her that quite set my brains a-wool-gathering. I told you from the first she was a very beautiful

fairy; and I do think the diamonds and precious jewels she had about her were well worth two or three kingdoms. They threw such a glittering all about, that one could not look at 'em long together. But this little one——"

"Well, well, but did they say nothing to each other? Didst thou hear nothing? What said the fairy?"

"What did she say? Oh, she said fine things, I do assure you. I listened with all my ears, and have got everything by heart word for word. 'Bless me!' said she, 'what a handsome young gentleman is here!'—'Is not he, madam?' said the other; 'I'll never be honest, if we have anything so handsome in all Valencia. I would lay you what you will, this is some sylph, or perhaps it may be a faun.'—'But how should he be here?' cried the fairy.—'Madam,' said the short one, 'he can have got here only by enchantment, for we certainly know all the men within ten leagues round the neighbourhood; and i' faith, a pretty young fellow like this is not a bargain to remain long concealed.' In short, signior, I shall not tell you over again all that they said about you, for you know pride is one of the seven deadly sins, and I would not take it upon my conscience to have been the cause of keeping you a single hour longer in purgatory than pleases God; no, not for an empire, I assure you."

"But, my good Pedrillo, if all thou hast been telling me is true, these are rather two female adventurers than fairies—for when did ever fairies talk in so familiar a strain as this?"

"Why, I must own to you, signior, this put me into some little scruple within myself, and that emboldened me to get nearer and nearer, and at last I spoke to them. But, when I looked the little one in the face, and saw the jewels that sparkled about the other—oh, and I had almost forgot to



tell you, they had two salamanders with them, that shone all over like the sun, and kept charge of the mules that the two fairies came upon."

"What sayest thou?—Salamanders?"

"Yes, signior, salamanders, true salamanders; and I know it by this, that when the two ladies were got upon their beasts again, they all took flight together through the air, so that in an instant, I saw as little of them as if they had never been here."

"Pedrillo, my friend," cried Don Sylvio, "thou art either determined to do me the honour of trifling with me, or else the fumes of the Malaga bewitched thy eyes when thou beheldest all these things. Who ever saw fairies, since there were any, mounted upon mules? If thou hadst said, indeed, that they took their flight in a chariot of gold or ebony, drawn by winged mules, one might have taken it for granted. But for a fairy to travel just as an honest farmer's wife would do, is what you will have some trouble to persuade people of. But, in short, thou must allow thou understandest nothing of these matters. Thy fairy must have been at best some lady that has an estate in this neighbourhood: the nymph who has made a conquest of thee, must have been her waiting-woman, and those whom thou tookest for salamanders must have been two sons of earth, called pages, who might be terribly embarrassed, should you make them pass, like true salamanders, from one end of the world to the other, in six or seven minutes' time, mounted upon a sunbeam."

"Signior," answered Pedrillo, "I thought I had deserved more confidence from you, than for you even to imagine me capable of wishing to impose upon you. If the salamanders who took charge of the mules were not salamanders, it is their affair, and not mine: what have I to do with it; or why must I be obliged to know whether they are one



thing more than another? All I can say is, that the will-o'-the-wisp, which you took last night for a salamander, was not a tenth part so much of a salamander as these two; and I'll be hanged, d'ye see, if that, compared with them, was a bit better than a farthing candle is to a flambeau; and as for the fairy, neither Artichocle nor Pluto shall ever persuade me but she was as much a fairy every bit as the fairy Rademante; nay, I could almost have sworn 'twas your own princess: for upon my word she had vastly the resemblance of that little picture that the fairy gave you——"

"Why, thou ravest, my dear Pedrillo?"

"No, faith, signior, the thing is just as I tell you. Now show me the princess, if you please.—Bless my soul! why, 'tis as like her as if it were spit out of her mouth. Excepting the size (for indeed this whole picture might almost lie upon her finger-nail) I could swear it was she herself."

"Hark'ye, Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio, "if the whole of thy narration did not already sufficiently show that thou hast only been dreaming, this single circumstance would be enough to prove it. I am as sure that this portrait resembles no one in the world but my princess, as I am of my own existence: now, as it cannot be denied to be impossible that my princess should cease to be a butterfly, till I have found her and have torn off her head and her wings, consequently, it is absolutely impossible for anybody whom thou hast seen to resemble my princess. This is a demonstration as clear as any in Euclid."

"I know nothing at all about remonstrations, Signior Don Sylvio," replied Pedrillo; "but what I saw, I saw; and was the Pope himself your cousin, you must excuse me if I rather trust to my own eyes than to your arguments. If I had an onion before me, and all the bachelors and licentiates of Salamancha—nay, all the patriarchs, monarchs, and

exarchs in Christendom wanted to prove to me that this same onion was not an onion, but a leg of mutton, I should still believe that an onion is an onion; and why? Why, because my eyes are my eyes, and because nobody in the world can know what I see, better than I myself. In short, your honour shall believe what you please; my comfort is, that in proper time and place, we shall see who is in the right: for the fairy, be she who she will, won't confine herself, I suppose, to a first visit. By Saint James, she looked as if she had some ill designs, and methinks she did not seem pleased to hear that you were in love with an enchanted butterfly."

"What then! didst thou tell her that, Pedrillo?"

"I most humbly beg your honour's pardon," said Pedrillo, a little confounded, "if I have not done right in telling it: but I hardly know what I said or did, that little sorceress did so pump me about it and about it, that I fancied myself bewitched, and then I thought in this manner: If she is a fairy, she will know it in spite of me, and I should only make her angry if I did not answer to her questions just as she would have me."

"And so then, thou hast suffered her to sift you? and thou hast told every thing?"

"Yes, yes, signior!—but in very general terms, and in so obscure a manner, that she never can comprehend anything about it, unless she be a fairy. But, as I told you before, that little one looked as if she knew all beforehand better than I did myself. I could lay anything she put all these questions to me only to see what answer I would make her."

"But, pray, what did she say, whom thou tookest for a fairy?"

"No great matters, for she was very thoughtful. 'We must be going,' said she, seemingly a good deal vexed; 'what will my brother say, when he sees we have stayed out so late?'"

"O Heavens!" exclaimed Don Sylvio, turning as

pale as death; "what horrors hast thou opened to my affrighted view! What if this should be the sister of the Green Dwarf——"

"Mercy on me, signior," cried Pedrillo, "what an idea have you started! Heaven grant you may not have guessed it right! But you bring it now exactly to my mind; she had, indeed, a green petticoat, and a green gown embroidered with gold. Well, what a beast am I—I thought no ill, for my part. But this plaguy little devil of a she-thing——"

"The more I think of all the circumstances of thy narration," continued Don Sylvio, "the more do I find my suspicions confirmed: nothing can be surer. It could be no other than that odious Donna Mergelina——"

"Nay, but, sir, the fairy was as beautiful as a spring morning; and Donna Smergelina, begging your honour's pardon, is one of the most disagreeable, ugliest hags I ever saw in my life. Now how can all this be?"

"The fairy, her aunt, has power enough to give her whatever shape she pleases; and surely it is not without reason that she should make her resemble my princess, as thou sayest she did?"

"Why, yes, signior, she had the resemblance, it is true: but, deuce take it, if she had her choice of whatever shape she pleased, sure she must have been a great fool to have shown her at first under the most hideous shape of all. One would hardly suppose she could be in love with that monstrous humpback, and such a circumference of fat bosom."

"Be that as it may," replied Don Sylvio; "but canst thou suppose then that this she-dwarf, all over deformed as she is, does not flatter herself with being one of the most amiable of her sex? or dost thou imagine that she would yield in beauty to my princess? No, Pedrillo, self-love is the greatest of all fairies, and has no need either of wands or talismans to produce the strangest metamorphoses.

When I call to mind what happened to me in the gardens of the fairy Radiante, and my last adventure with the sylphid, I am mightily apprehensive——"

"Why, look ye here, signior!" interrupted Pedrillo, "if the beautiful lady who looked at you so earnestly is Donna Smergelina, there is no more to be said: but I must beg your pardon for the little one. I don't know how it comes about, but my heart tells me that the shape she appeared in was her own proper shape; and I'll venture to lose my ears, if you find anywhere in the world two eyes, a nose, and a little mouth, that could suit her better than those she had. In short, I cannot bear to think of any change befalling her; but if, at all events, your fancy is determined to have her metaphrased, let it be only into an orange-tree; so I may but be turned into a bee at the same time, and you will but banish for two hundred leagues every way about her, all the other bees, drones, hornets, flies, gnats, and so forth."

"Heyday, Pedrillo," cried Don Sylvio, "what, art thou beginning to have poetical sallies? What cannot love do! If thou goest on at this rate we shall presently see whole volumes of tender elegies and sonnets of thy own composing. But, my good friend, I advise thee not to flatter thyself too much. This may not be the first time that the Green Dwarf has assumed the shape of a fair young nymph. Thou wouldst do well to remember what happened to me this morning. The only thing that makes me judge the best of them is, that they have left me my princess's picture just as it was."

"Very well, signior," said Pedrillo; "but when you consider the matter strictly, you will find that here is one certain Pedrillo to whom you may owe this too: they certainly were got so close to you that I know not what might have been the case, if I had nor come just in the nick of time. The little rogue,

indeed, had such a look with her—just the look of a young rogue; and then she whispered to the other, and told her I don't know what, and kept every moment pointing to you with her finger. But, as I said before, I disturbed their schemes a little, by creeping out of my nest. Ay, ay, my dear creatures, Pedrillo is not quite so silly as you may think him; he's no fool, I promise ye——"

"Well, well enough," said Don Sylvio, rising, and preparing himself to go; "for this time we have got off safely; but let us stay here no longer. The evening is very fine, and we may travel some leagues before night overtakes us. Possibly we may soon see what the apparition thou speakest of prognosticated for us. Time will clear it up."

Pedrillo, who, 'tis well known, had always the gift of speaking the last word, took occasion from the word prognosticate, to turn the conversation to that rich subject of forethoughts, signs, and other things of the like nature: accordingly, as they walked on, he regaled his master with a very circumstantial detail of all the stories and events of this kind, which he pretended to have happened to the great-aunts, and great-grandames of his family, from time immemorial, and to have passed by a faithful tradition from grandmother to grandmother. He did not perceive that Don Sylvio, whose mind was quite otherwise engaged, paid not the least attention to his tales; and even if he had perceived it, he might not have ceased his loquacity on that account; for thinking and talking were the same thing to honest Pedrillo; and provided you let him go on without interruption, it was indifferent to him whether you listened to him or no: a discretion this, which he held in common with a certain poet of our acquaintance, who never went to see his friends without having a large bundle of his works in his pocket, which he began reading the moment he was seated. His auditors

in the meantime, were at perfect liberty either to yawn, or sleep, or snore, as much and as heartily as they pleased. Our poet's enthusiasm did not permit him to observe this; and provided the hearers, after a nap of two or three hours, waked time enough to hear the end of the poem, and confirm the poet's self-given applause, the latter had no doubt of having amused his friends in the best manner possible.

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH DON SYLVIO SHOWS HIMSELF IN A VERY ADVANTAGEOUS LIGHT

Our travellers had now been walking about half an hour, when suddenly they heard the report of pistols, which was followed with a shrill loud cry, coming from the adjacent wood.

"Hark!" said Don Sylvio, "I hear a voice that seems to demand our help; we must run and see what it means."

Pedrillo, who at night, and in those hours when spirits are supposed to walk, was the greatest poltroon in the world, had on the contrary the courage of a young Andalusian bull, when business called him to fight with flesh-and-blood men like himself. He therefore made not the least difficulty to follow his master. They had hardly got above fifty or sixty paces into the wood, following a noise they heard, when all on a sudden they perceived, in a very beautitul spot of plain ground, three men on horseback attacked by seven others (four of them also mounted), with the greatest fury. Don Sylvio, without a moment's hesitation, flew to the assistance of the weakest, among whom was a handsome young cavalier that stood defending himself singly against three of his antagonists, and with all the bravery of a Spaniard fighting for his mistress. A moment later, and his help had been of little avail; for one of the young gentleman's adversaries was upon the point of giving him a stroke that might have terminated the combat, if Don Sylvio

had not immediately thrown himself in between them, parrying the blow with his sabre, which indeed rather resembled the Durindana of the great Orlando, than the sword of a *petit maître* in our days.

While Don Sylvio, as little cut out as he was for these death-doing exploits, laid furiously about him, to the terror of the enemies, who were startled at his apparition, his courage, and the bitter blows he dealt them, Pedrillo, on his part, did not stand still with his arms across. His only armour was a thick knotty club-staff; but he had the skill and address to wield it so nimbly, that in less than five minutes he had downed with two of the most formidable assailants. In a word, our adventurers laboured with such success, that victory soon declared for their party, and the enemy were forced to seek their safety in flight, and abandon two of their corps, greatly bruised, to the discretion of the conquerors.

As soon as the combat was over, Don Sylvio looked round for the young cavalier, in whose cause he had so deeply interested himself at first sight, to testify his joy at the fortunate issue of this perilous adventure. The latter, however, had nothing so near his heart at present, as the succour of a young lady that was now lying half-dead in the arms of her waiting-woman, at a small distance from the field of battle. They had much ado to bring her to life, and the manner in which the young gentleman seemed affected, left it doubtful whether she were his sister or his beloved mistress. The moment she had recovered her senses, "My dear Jacintha," he cried, "if your deliverance is dear to you, and if the life of a friend, who wishes to live but for your sake, is not indifferent to you, behold here the amiable young cavalier, to whose generosity and valour I am indebted for both these blessings."

At these words Don Sylvio approached her, with



that noble, graceful air, which nature, or I know not what fairy, had conferred upon him at his birth. After having profoundly saluted the young lady, he signified to her in the most lively terms, the joy he felt at having been the means of her deliverance. 'Tis true, his expressions, as usual, had a pretty romantic, high-flown turn; but the emotions with which the gentleman and lady were agitated, hindered them from taking notice of it. The young lady was still too weak and too much affrighted to be able to express her gratitude otherwise than by signs; but Don Eugenio (for that was the young gentleman's name), and Don Gabriel his friend, who no less owed his life to our hero, testified theirs in the strongest manner. At length, after having learned from Don Sylvio that he was escaped safe and sound from the engagement, Don Gabriel said to the fair Jacintha, "Our defender, in every respect, so much resembles a guardian angel, that we have no reason to be astonished that he should be as invulnerable as an angel."

Don Sylvio, all this while, stood looking at the young lady with such attention, and with such certain inward emotions, as the more surprised him, on account of his having always thought that there was no woman in the world charming enough to make the least impression on that heart of his, in which the picture of his princess bore a sovereign sway. The beauty of this fair unknown, who seemed not to be above sixteen years of age, had nothing very dazzling, indeed, at first sight: but none could possess in a more eminent degree that enchanting charm, which cannot be defined; and which, in the judgment of connoisseurs, is more taking than beauty itself. It was impossible, from the first glance, to refuse her his benevolence—such was the attraction diffused over her whole person: even the slightest look of hers had something tenderly affecting; the ordinary sound of her voice

seemed music, and even sadness itself could not efface the charming smile that graced her pretty mouth.

Don Sylvio seemed for some minutes to undergo such a trial from these seducing charms, as might have made Don Eugenio uneasy; but the wounds which the latter and his friend had received in the combat, and which they had neglected during the first heat of action, now began to bleed again so fast, that they found it necessary to get them dressed immediately. Jacintha, who never lost sight of Don Eugenio, no sooner saw the blood trickle from her friend, than she instantly gave a plaintive shriek, and fell into a fainting-fit as before.

This accident served to confirm our hero in the opinion, that they could be no other than a couple of lovers; nor had he now the least doubt, but that the young lady was a princess, whom some odious rival had endeavoured to tear from her favourite lover by the help of an enchanter. This idea, as is very natural to suppose, redoubled the concern he had hitherto felt for her, from so unexpected an interview.

Don Eugenio's wound was not dangerous, and the fair Jacintha's swoon was as little so as those of young ladies generally are, whether occasioned by an excess of pain or of pleasure. Having therefore brought her to herself again by the assistance of sal volatile, and the gentleman's wounds being dressed as well as they could be done in such a hurry, it was determined that, as the night drew on, and Donna Jacintha wanted repose, they should stop at the first inn they could meet with on the road. Our hero, for better security, offered to accompany them, and Don Eugenio accepted the offer with the greater pleasure as he was curious to know who this amiable, but singular Unknown could be, to whom he was so fortuitously indebted both for his life and his mistress. Accordingly,

after a few compliments had passed on both sides, Don Eugenio got into their carriage, which was in waiting just by, and seating the young lady beside him, give his horse to Pedrillo; who throughout the whole scene stood with open eyes staring at all he saw, and felt himself not a little flattered by the obliging things which Don Gabriel and his valet expressed of his valour. It was not without some difficulty that he could persuade himself to occupy a seat so near Mrs Teresilla, a young lass of six and thirty, who had laid on the white and red so artfully that, what with the help of a fair bosom, which she very modestly exposed, and so finished a complexion, Pedrillo was soon mightily inclined to believe, nay, and if need were, could have sworn to his beautiful sylphid, that the object before him, (or, more properly speaking, behind him) could not be above twenty at the utmost.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMPANY ARRIVES AT THE INN.

As they travelled very slowly, it was almost ten o'clock when they arrived at an inn, where, as their best accommodation, they found nothing but a number of empty rooms.

Happily for our society, the chief persons had more need of rest than of eating; for the landlord had all his excuses at his fingers' ends, as to every thing they wanted. The wild fowl was all gone yesterday; the butcher's meat was to be brought in to-morrow morning; the vulture had carried off his pigeons, and it was but the night before, that a little devil of a polecat had depopulated the whole hen-roost. However, the next day he hoped he should be able to regale them like persons of quality; for his house had the good fortune to be frequented by nobles and grandees, and the day before yesterday he had lodged the Count de Leyva, and last Monday he had had the Duchess of Medina Sidonia, with a vast retinue of cavaliers and ladies.

The landlord would have run on in this strain a long time, if they had chosen to give him audience. But as Mrs Teresilla, the *valet de chambre*, and Pedrillo, had business to transact with their masters and mistress, and as the latter were busied on their own concerns, it became necessary to interrupt his narration in the midst of the Duchess of Medina Sidonia's repast, with which he regaled their ears. At length therefore, after many compliments and reverences, he retired to the stables, to see that the

horses and mules were well served; that is to say, as well as their masters.

Donna Jacintha, who was by no means well, took leave of her protectors, after repeating her lively sense of gratitude to them, especially our hero, for having thus risked their lives with so much generosity for her sake.

Don Sylvio accompanied Don Eugenio and his friend to their apartment, to be present at the dressing of their wounds, and soon after retired to leave them to that repose, which, in their present situation, they so much wanted.

The two young gentlemen, and particularly Don Gabriel, had put themselves to a good deal of pains, as far as decency permitted, to lead our hero to a discovery of his name and quality. However, they could get nothing out of him but vague, mysterious, and broken hints, which served to confirm them in the idea of his being a kind of adventurer. On the one hand, his beauty, noble mien, and valour, the gracefulness of his person, and the politeness of his behaviour, prejudiced them so much the more favourably in his behalf, as it was easily seen that he owed all these advantages to nature. For though he possesssed that species of politeness, which is acknowledged as such among all nations, as it consists merely in the expression of a great affability, and in a combination of certain regards which we owe to ourselves with those which we owe to others; yet was Don Sylvio totally deficient of that *ton* which at this time reigned in the most considerable cities of Spain, amongst that sort of people who are called the *beau monde*. The same thing was observable in his dress and outward attire; and the terrible sabre that hung at his side made so ridiculous a contrast with the rest of his apparel, that one could hardly tell what to think of him.

While the two cavaliers deferred satisfying their

curiosity till the next morning, Don Sylvio, on his part, did not a little rejoice in having been so fortunate as to render his services to one of the most amiable princesses upon earth, as well as to that young prince or cavalier, who seemed to him so worthy of her: and being persuaded that some great fairy interested herself in their fortunes, he was in hopes that this new acquaintance might possibly have some happy influence on his own affairs. These last were too much at his heart to suffer him to be long occupied by other considerations. The image of this dear princess, her deplorable metamorphosis, the snares of the fairy Fanfreluche; in a word, everything that had befallen him for some days past, like a torrent poured in afresh and usurped his imagination. After having therefore resigned himself for a few restless hours to his usual reveries, deploring the fate of his unfortunate princess, as well as his own, he at length fell asleep, with his head full of those agreeable perspectives, which a secret anticipation represented much nearer to him than he had any reason to believe.

CHAPTER V

WHICH THE AUTHOR HOPES MAY FALL INTO THE HANDS OF NO CHAMBERMAID OR WAITING-WOMAN.

DURING the interval of our conducting the princess and her heroes to bed, whom we shall allow to sleep as long as they please, Pedrillo, who as we have already observed, always trusted to the present moment, could not resist an inclination to become better acquainted with the fair Teresilla. As good luck would have it, there was no one else that could have disputed with him the advantage of *tête-à-tête*; for the *valet de chambre*, who had been grazed with a pistol shot, and was moreover slightly wounded by two or three cuts of a sabre in the conflict, was now retired to rest: as for the coachman, he was not a man to dare think of a lady's waiting-woman.

Pedrillo availed himself therefore of this opportunity to sit and chat with Mrs Teresilla, while a fat Gallician slattern was busy in the kitchen preparing a ragout made out of a young cat well peppered, to give these strangers instead of a rabbit.

The charms of conversation augmented the impression which the roses and lilies of Teresilla's new-made complexion may be supposed to have made upon an honest country lad, who took it all for natural; and the lady, on account of the sultry heat, having thrown off her handkerchief, Pedrillo's passion suddenly mounted to such a degree, bounding at every step insensibly beyond the limits of



platonic love, that the fair Teresilla, however great her confidence in the strength of her virtue might be, had soon room to fancy herself in some danger.

However, certain it is, she conducted herself towards him in such a manner as if she had nothing to fear on her part: whether this proceeded from the good opinion she had of him (for we have already remarked that he was a lad of a very promising appearance) or whether from the inexperience of her youth, or whatever other particular cause, we cannot say: only we are so much the more strongly inclined to suspect the last of these, since no sooner did she perceive the advantage which poor Pedrillo's weakness seemed to give her over him, than she displayed all the power of her charms and eloquence, to get from him the name and private concerns of his master.

But Pedrillo, who probably had made the same observation as she, was determined to sell her the secret, at least as dear as possible: accordingly he insisted upon it that she should previously tell him the history of Donna Jacintha, if she wished to tempt him even in the slightest manner to trespass against the express and rigorous prohibition of his master.

The fair (and perhaps we may soon be obliged to add, the tender) Teresilla, perceiving she had to deal with a man who was not to be managed in too strict a way, did not hesitate a moment to satisfy Pedrillo's curiosity by a very circumstantial relation, which, excepting a few of the main points, was possibly just as apocryphal as the relations given by waiting-women of their mistresses memoirs usually are. However, from thence Pedrillo learned that Donna Jacintha was but just as good a Donna as any of those that hang their shifts out to dry upon the hedges; that it was her face and little person which composed all her titles to nobility, all her



fortune, claims, and every pretension; nay, that she was even supposed to have been a deserted foundling, whose mother could never absolutely say to whom she owed her existence; that for some time she had cut a great figure upon the stage at Granada; that she had had as many lovers there as men who came to be spectators of her performance: that, among the rest, none had taken more pains to gain her heart than Don Ferdinand de Zamora, a very rich young cavalier, who had put himself to great expense on her account, without being able, as was said, to obtain the least favour from her: that, in short, among all who had sighed for her, Don Eugenio de Lirias seemed to be the only one whose lively and virtuous attachment she had at least suffered, if not encouraged; but that none could be fool enough to be duped by these appearances of a rigid virtue, when once they were well acquainted with Donna Jacintha. That it was a clear point she loved Don Eugenio to distraction; and that she would not have continued cruel all this while, but for a scheme she had of bringing him to do the last mad thing, by marrying her. That in this view she had absolutely persuaded him to remove her from the stage, and put her for some time into a convent at Valencia, from whence she might be able to re-appear in the world under another name. But, unfortunately, this project had been betrayed a few weeks before its execution, to Don Ferdinand de Zamora; (Mrs Teresilla might as well have said at the same time by whom, for it was she herself who had done this notable feat). This Don Ferdinand, she observed, had assigned his despair in consequence of his ill success, and other like reasons, as a pretence for his retreat from Granada, in order in the mean time to make the necessary preparations for bearing off the prize by force from his happy rival; that he must certainly have known of the very day when Jacintha was to set out from Valencia, as the

event had very clearly shown. That, in short, he had taken his measures so well, as to have surprised her within a league of Montesa, where he had made himself master of her person: that in all probability his design was to have conveyed her to one of his estates in Arragon; but, as the lady's good luck would have it, they had met with Don Eugenio upon the road, who was supposed to be at Valencia, but had merely by chance been taking a ride that way with his friend Don Gabriel; little suspecting, surely, to find his mistress in the power of a rival. Accordingly, the moment they met, Don Eugenio, notwithstanding the enemy's superiority in number, determined sooner to lose his life than his dear Jacintha: but that in all likelihood, he would have lost both, if a lucky chance had not brought him that assistance in the person of the young cavalier unknown, and the brave Pedrillo, in consequence of which, victory immediately declared in their favour.

The complaisant Teresilla having thus finished her story, begged, as was but reasonable, the like condescension from Pedrillo. The latter, however, had many difficulties instantly at his fingers' end: as an excuse, he alleged the importance of the secret, his word given, and the danger to which he should expose himself by his indiscretion. In short, she expended all her eloquence upon him, and bestowed even many little favours, which, though of no mighty consequence in themselves, must nevertheless, in her opinion, be more than sufficient to inspire him with the most lively sense of gratitude. Pedrillo proved to her by good reasons, and with his usual strength of argument, that secrets of this nature were to be entrusted only to such persons from whom nothing was kept concealed; and even went so far as to set the complaisance she required of him at so exorbitant a price, as she might reasonably think excessive, without being in the strictest sense a vestal.

Cicero, whom every one justly allows to have been an incomparable orator, a great statesman, a moderate philosopher, and a very poor general, in one of his pleasing and instructive pieces, somewhere observes, "That the desire of knowledge is the most natural instinct of mankind. This desire of knowing," says he, "seems to be something so essential to our constitution, that nature herself inclines us to whatever may increase our stock of science, without a hope or view of any peculiar advantage." And after having given a few instances, he adds, "Homer seems to have had this in his eye, when he says of the sirens, that the magical virtue of their song did not so much consist in the charms of their voice, or in the extraordinary sweetness of their melody, as in people's being persuaded that they knew everything that passed throughout the world; promising their hearers to send them back more learned than they came." He supposes that a little charm could not have attracted so great a man as Ulysses to such a degree, that, without the sage regimen prescribed by the fairy Circe, the certainty even of an unavoidable shipwreck would have been insufficient to preserve him from the fatal rocks of the enchantress.

The youthful and virtuous Teresilla furnishes us with a memorable instance how far this illustrious author's observation above quoted is just. The price stipulated by the interested Pedrillo for the discovery of his secret at first disconcerted her. She did not fail to urge many objections, and made use of every argument to bring him to a just abatement in his demands: but, as he obstinately insisted upon what this history cannot be supposed capable of relating anywhere but in his chamber, at length she saw herself obliged to sacrifice her little scruples to the desire of extending her knowledge, estimating its importance by the greatness of the price required. Accordingly she promised him, that as soon as all the family was retired, she would come to him in

his chamber, upon condition, however, that he should not abuse the great confidence she thus reposed in him. Pedrillo, who had nothing to urge against the equity of this condition, promised her whatever she would; and both of them kept their word as religiously as can be conceived.

"Is it you, signior?" he cried, making as if he was just waked out of a sound sleep; "what's the matter with you, that you are up so early?"

"Dress thyself and follow me instantly to my chamber," replied Don Sylvio, with a tone of voice that set Pedrillo a-trembling. So saying, he stepped on and locked Pedrillo's room door, which Mrs Teresilla had left half open.

"I'll be ready immediately, signior," said Pedrillo, "if you will leave me alone a moment, for 'twould not be quite so decent to put on my breeches before your honour."

"Do what thou wilt," said Don Sylvio: "but I tell thee make haste, or we shall be undone for ever."

Pedrillo, who no longer doubted but his master had overheard all that passed betwixt him and Mrs Teresilla, cursed in his heart the year, month, day, hour, and minute, when he first caught sight of this seductive siren. She in a moment seemed to him as ugly, old, hagged and disagreeable, as some moments before he had thought her young, handsome, genteel, and desirable; and gladly would he have beat himself, could that have done the cause any good. But, as the instinct aforesaid assured him that the only means of getting out of this bobble was a stiff denial, at length he made his appearance before his master, firmly resolved to be tossed in a blanket sooner than confess any thing whatever.

As soon as he entered Don Sylvio's chamber, his master ordered him to bolt the door: this done, with all the sternness of an Inquisitor-General, he began the following examination:—

"What person was that just now in thy chamber?"

"What person, signior?" replied Pedrillo, with a voice as if he did not at all understand the question.

"Traitor!" cried Don Sylvio, "mind me. I will know who it was."

"Signior," answered Pedrillo, "I know of nobody at all, excepting yourself when I saw you open the door, and you came and waked me: for I don't suppose you mean to speak of the fleas, though I am sure I have had at least two or three hundred thousand of them for my bed-fellows: the cursed vermin kept waking me every minute almost; whole regiments of them came on, and, as it were, relieved guard by turns. I'll be hanged if they did not make such a noise that it almost stunned me; not to mention half a dozen great he-cats that kept running about the roof, just over my window, and seemed as if they meant to give the little cat of the inn a serenade, for they did me-aw so miserably that my very back aches with it to this moment."

"A truce with thy impertinent prating," said Don Sylvio; "depend upon it, it shall not serve your turn. I saw a person go out of thy chamber, I heard that person speaking with thee, and I will know who it was."

"Signior," cried Pedrillo, "let me die if I know what to answer you. If you have seen anything, I don't pretend to contradict you; the fairies have endowed you with this gift, and you can always see more than we common folks. But as to me, if I was to grant I had seen anything, it—it must have been in a dream; for I slept very sound, except indeed, when the fleas, and the cats a-caterwauling, waked me, as I told you before. I can say nothing more to it if 'twas for my life."

"Wretch!" said Don Sylvio, drawing his terrible sabre, "I'll not be thus put off by thy contemptible evasions. Confess the truth this instant, or thou diest!"

"Oh, my dear master, Signior Don Sylvio," cried Pedrillo, throwing himself at his feet, "I conjure you by all the saints to spare my youth; I'll tell you



"Is it you, signior?" he cried, making as if he was just waked out of a sound sleep; "what's the matter with you, that you are up so early?"

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"Wretch!" said Don Sylvio, drawing his terrible sabre, "I'll not be thus put off by thy contemptible evasions. Confess the truth this instant, or thou diest!"

"Oh, my dear master, Signior Don Sylvio," cried Pedrillo, throwing himself at his feet, "I conjure you by all the saints to spare my youth; I'll tell you

every thing I know. What is it that can lead you to use me so cruelly? I have served you many a year, and you know I would run through fire and water for you, if you required it. Do pray, signior, pray put up that dreadful sabre, and I'll confess everything to you: and yet it would be a monstrous thing to die because a body has seen nothing. O holy Saint James! provided I am but saved this time —Indeed, signior, you could not treat me worse even if you had caught me in bed with Donna Jacintha's waiting-woman."

"Glorious evasion!" replied Don Sylvio; "and dost thou conceive me then so stupid, as to imagine that the waiting-woman of a princess would make herself so familiar with thee, whom she has known nothing of but for three or four hours past, as to spend the night in thy chamber? I tell thee again, thou hast no other way to save thy life, than that of declaring to me the truth. No harm shall come to thee; but I do insist upon thy telling the truth."

"And what then would you have me tell you, signior?" said Pedrillo. "I know nothing more than what I have told you already, and if I must say more than I know, you ought to put the words into my mouth."

"Answer me exactly to all I ask thee—was there not somebody with thee just now in thy chamber?"

"Ten thousand squadrons of fleas, as I told your honour before; and except them, no soul living that I know of."

"Who then was the person that I saw go out at the other door, as I came in at this?"

"I know nothing at all about it, signior; I waked the moment you called me, for I was then fast asleep. If you have seen anything, you must absolutely know what it was better than I."

"It seemed to me to be the figure of a woman, but I could not distinguish what she was. She got

away in a hurry, or rather disappeared the very instant I perceived her."

"Oh, the devil, signior; why then, it must have been some spirit, and that's not at all unlikely. At our first coming into this house, everything had a look that smacked of ghosts. If you have seen something that immediately vanished, God help us! it must certainly have been a spirit, that possibly may have been killed in this room in times past. Upon my soul, I am as glad I saw nothing of it, as if anybody had given me a whole county; for I'm sure I should have died upon the spot."

Pedrillo spoke this with so ingenuous an air, that Don Sylvio began to think he had accused him unjustly.

"But, pray now," continued he, "though you might not see anything, did not you hear anything stirring?"

"Signior," replied Pedrillo, "people you know sometimes have very droll fancies, especially when 'tis in the night time, and at a strange house. I should not have thought much about it, however, for I still very well remember how you laughed at me when I saw the giant, that you cut a great branch off from yesterday morning. But now, as you yourself seem to believe that this inn is a little bedevilled or so, I will frankly tell you. You must know, about half an hour ago I waked, and then it seemed to me just for all the world as if a great bundle had tumbled upon me, that almost hindered me from breathing. Some moments after this, I could have sworn I heard people talking in a low voice. I wanted vastly to know what they said, but was in such a fright that I hid myself under the bedclothes, and so I fell asleep a little and a little by degrees; and then I heard no more of it. This is the exact truth, and if you don't find this is fact, kill me if you like it, or else throw me to the fleas of this house, and I am sure they are

as much famished as the wolves are upon the Pyrenean Mountains. I'll consent to anything."

"Pedrillo, my friend," answered Don Sylvio, in a tone of voice that restored the other to life and spirits, "I am satisfied: but when I tell thee how far the malice of certain persons that shall be nameless, is carried, thou wilt not be surprised at my having talked to thee so roughly. Know then, that with my own ears I just now overheard a scheme projected in thy chamber to rob me of the portrait of my dear princess. I am persuaded thou art incapable of so black a treason: but upon the faith of a cavalier, I swear to thee, that I heard thy voice distinctly. I have not therefore a moment's doubt but these must have been my two enemies, one of whom borrowed thy voice with a design, that if they had not succeeded in stealing away the picture, they might at least make me suppose thee to be the most infamous of all traitors."

"Why, what a cursed rascal is this, signior," cried Pedrillo; "pox take it, this is carrying the joke a little too far. At this rate an honest man is not safe even in his bed, so long as a cursed dwarf or an enchanter can borrow his shape, and commit such crimes under that mask as might get a poor creature hanged for their devilish tricks. But pray now, signior, what did my voice, or the sorceress that had got my tone, say to it?"

"Make thyself easy, Pedrillo," replied our hero; "I am persuaded of thy innocence, and we are both amply revenged, as they have failed of their double design. But get thyself ready; I will not stay a moment longer in this house."

"But would you go, then," said Pedrillo, "without taking leave of the lady and gentleman, whose life you saved yesterday? You know they were so taken up with their wounds, that they had not even time to thank you for it as they should; and I can't help thinking that saving a person's life is

such a service as at least deserves a God bless you."

"I don't pretend to thanks," replied Don Sylvio, "for an action in which I only did my duty, whither I consider myself as a cavalier, or merely as a man. I would do the same thing at any time for a Turk, a Jew, or a Pagan; and though I could have wished to know something more particularly of their adventures, the horrible discovery which I have just made, forces me to change my resolution. How fortunate was it for me to have waked time enough to frustrate these wretches in their scheme! But I am sure it was an invisible hand that awaked me; and I confess to thee, I don't think myself safe in this house a single moment. The fairy Radiante has promised me her protection, but it was on the express condition of our going in search of my beloved princess; and if thou callest to mind, thou wilt see that every mischance we have met with in our journey, has constantly befell us either while we were asleep, or taking any repose——"

"True, signior, you are right," said Pedrillo, "excepting the ditch indeed, that your salamanders led us into——"

"And for my own part," continued Don Sylvio, "I look upon them as a just punishment for the not having better fulfilled my vows, which were, that I would not close my eyes till I had found my princess. In a word, Pedrillo, I am determined not to stay a moment longer in this house, where perhaps the fairy Fanfreluche may have her friends, or other advantages unknown to me. Get thy wallet then, and let us decamp privately: the day is but just dawning, every body is asleep, and even if our enemies were upon the watch, I am persuaded that Radiante will involve us in so thick a mist, that Argus himself, with his hundred eyes, could not see us through it."

"Well, signior," said Pedrillo, "since you will have it so, we may think ourselves lucky to have escaped so well. Pox take it! I had no good opinion of the matter from the first moment I found such legions of fleas pouring upon me. I do assure you I am half-eaten up; and I could venture to take my oath upon a book, they are not natural fleas, but enchanted porcupines and hedgehogs, that this cursed tribe of enchanters has been pleased to hunt us with like so many hares."

Pedrillo went on talking at this rate, till he had packed up his wallet, being afraid every minute that if he left his master time for reflection, he might get at the truth. As soon therefore as he was ready, they sallied so very softly out of the house, leaving their reckoning unpaid, that even Mrs Teresilla herself, who for good reasons kept very quietly in her chamber, had not the least suspicion of their departure.

CHAPTER VII

A SHORT DIGRESSION TO LIRIAS: WHICH MAY SERVE TO SHOW THAT THE AUTHOR IS NOT SO UNSKILLED IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HUMAN HEART, AS PERHAPS SOME MIGHT THINK HIM

UNCERTAIN which way to pursue his route, Don Sylvio cordially regretted the loss of poor little Pimpimp. However, as the thing was without remedy, they contented themselves with keeping the same road they had hitherto come.

For some hours together so little remarkable happened to them, that, not to fatigue the reader by an incessant recital of their dialogues, we shall here make a little digression to Lirias, where the amiable Donna Felicia, with her worthy confidante, were greatly surprised at not finding Don Eugenio, and much more so on hearing that he went out on horseback with Don Gabriel, attended only by his footman. His unusual absence put them into a cruel state of disquietude, and the prudent Laura thought she could not do better than to divert her mistress's attention from this to some other object.

Accordingly, they passed almost the whole night in talking of nothing but Don Sylvio. The love with which, even sleeping, he had been happy enough to inspire the charming Felicia, manifested itself so openly in her discourse, that it must have been too gross an affectation, had she wished to make a mystery of it to her dear Laura; who, for the goodness of her heart, as well as of her understanding, was not unworthy the confidence with

which her mistress honoured her, in raising her to the rank of a friend.

Their eyes had already told them that this unknown sleeper was the handsomest of all mortals. They enlarged therefore with so much the more satisfaction on the subject, as hitherto they had met with no other opportunities of knowing his merit. But to know who he was, and whether his condition and his moral qualities corresponded to the beauty of his external, this was a trying point, and it left poor Donna Felicia in a terrible anxiety; at least, however, she made it seem so, in order to have the pleasure of seeing all her doubts destroyed by the good Laura.

Hence, after they had said every thing that could be said for and against, it was at length agreed to be not at all improbable, for a young man, whose figure seemed, as it were, expressly formed by nature to indicate an excellent mind, to be at the same time the most noble and virtuous, the most brave and agreeable, in short, the most amiable creature that ever woman produced to the world. Nay, the testimony of Pedrillo himself, as little disposed as they were to believe any thing he had said in the least disadvantageous to his master, was esteemed so much more authentic, on account of the praises he bestowed upon his moral character, since domestics are not usually fond of speaking well of their masters to strange people.

But what was to be done with the enchanted butterfly, the princess, the fairies, and the dwarf, whom Pedrillo had thrown into his narrative? What were they to think of that very serious look, that honest physiognomy, and positive tone with which a lad like this, (who had nothing at all the air of one that wanted to impose upon ladies) had assured them, that his master was in love with an enchanted princess, whom he flattered him with delivering, under the auspices of a mighty fairy.



Donna Felicia was not so easily to be satisfied on this head; and it cost the ingenious Laura a deal of trouble to persuade her mistress to do, in this case, as the rational Mussulmans do in regard to certain incredible and childish stories of the Alcoran, who suppose that they must be taken in an allegorical sense, under which, the moment you had got the key, nothing more could be found than some very natural and very common love-adventure. This explication, however, plausible as it might seem, was not entirely satisfactory to Donna Felicia: in a word, Laura had opportunity to remark, that the young lady would rather see her young lover a little crazy, with his heart at liberty, than to find him perfectly in his right senses, and in love with another.

She concluded therefore with telling Laura, that she must try to learn, as soon as possible, something more clear and positive concerning this Don Sylvio de Rosalva. Luckily, chance stood her friend in this respect better than she could have hoped; for the same barber whom we have already so frequently mentioned, (and who, by the way, passed for a great surgeon throughout the whole district, and was the only one for at least ten leagues round), came accidentally to Lirias the day after Don Sylvio's flight from the inn, to dress one of the domestics who had broken his thigh a few weeks before.

Laura happened to come into the room where the barber attended, just as he was relating, with that volubility of tongue appropriated to his profession from time immemorial, the news of Don Sylvio's elopement; news which, as he observed, had become the subject of conversation through the whole neighbourhood of Rosalva. Laura therefore had no great difficulty to get from this faithful narrator all necessary information respecting our hero. Accordingly, she learned what kind of woman

his aunt was; next, the manner in which the young gentleman had been brought up, his mode of life, the scheme of Donna Menzia for marrying him to the hundred thousand ducats of the hideous Mergelina Sanchez; and lastly, how Don Sylvio had taken flight with his footman Pedrillo, probably to avoid being obliged to espouse a person so disagreeable, and that nobody knew what was become either of the master or man. The barber moreover declared, that as to personal qualities, his superior for beauty, knowledge, and virtue, was yet unborn; adding, that he supposed he should have said enough when he assured the gentlemen and ladies present, that under his instructions Don Sylvio had made such great progress only in two months upon the guitar, that he freely acknowledged himself his inferior at that instrument. As to any love-intrigue of Don Sylvio's, whatever might have been said, the barber, for his part, insisted that he was entirely ignorant of it. However, he could not but say, that the cavalier was really a little singular and romantic, and that in a late conversation they had held together, he, the barber, had discovered in the young man such a taste for fairy tales, that he believed it had led him to take them all for true histories; nay, and that Don Sylvio was so strongly persuaded of the existence of fairies, as to have assured him that he should not think it at all extraordinary, if such things happened to himself.

This intelligence comprehended almost every thing that was wanted to compose the mind of Donna Felicia.

But though the romantic turn of Don Sylvio's brain was the more agreeable to her, as she found it coincide so nearly with her own mode of thinking, yet still, on the other hand, she was not very well satisfied to see him carry his passion for fairies to such a degree of extravagance as nearly bordered

upon a kind of madness. "Perhaps," said she, "he may be in love with an ideal princess whom he never saw, and possibly, to give his amour a more mysterious air, he may have persuaded himself she has been changed into a butterfly by some fairy that protects his rival." The idea, however, seemed to be an extremely silly one: but surely, if Don Sylvio was ridiculous for being enamoured only in idea, how much less so was Donna Felicia, to be jealous of that idea? She herself indeed saw and felt it; but in spite of the confidence she had in her good Laura, she could not, without blushing, avow her weakness. Their conversation on the subject led them insensibly to form various projects to see if they could not bring about a more intimate acquaintance with Don Sylvio. But, unfortunately for them, fresh difficulties arose every moment; difficulties which they had not discovered, till after having highly pleased themselves in anticipation of the good effect their plans must certainly produce. Nothing therefore at length was left them, but to hope for some lucky chance, which they flattered themselves might soon turn out more favourably for them and their design, than the best concerted projects they could devise.

CHAPTER VIII

A MOST DEPLORABLE ADVENTURE WITH A PARCEL OF FEMALE HAY-MAKERS

DON SYLVIO, with his *fidus Achates*, had now been travelling a good while, discoursing by the way on the various subjects with which the adventures of their journey had supplied them, and every now and then reposing themselves in those pleasant little woods, that like so many garlands variegate and adorn the charming rural scenes of the province of Valencia.

At length they found themselves in a little cypress grove, whither the heat, that now began to be troublesome, obliged them to retire. There for a while they amused themselves in contemplating that smiling prospect which extends itself over the flowery meads along the banks of the Guadalaviar; when, suddenly, Pedrillo made such a discovery, as seemed to promise our hero a happy issue of all his cares, his amorous anxieties, and almost hopeless pursuits.

"Huzza! courage, sir," he exclaimed; "let us jump for joy; for unless I am as blind as a beetle, we have found our princess. Don't you see that blue butterfly there, skipping about the rose-bushes?"

Pedrillo was not quite out in his conjecture, for it was really a blue butterfly; and Don Sylvio too eagerly wished it might be his princess to suffer him a moment's doubt upon the subject. "Come along, signior," said Pedrillo; "do you slip softly down on the other side, and I'll keep close to this:

it can't get away from us, and I fancy the princess will have nothing to do but see you, to make her fly immediately into your hands."

In truth, the butterfly seemed to justify Pedrillo's hopes. It made directly up to Don Sylvio, and kept flitting about him on all sides. He had now got very near it, and in a transport of exulting joy and warm desire stretched out his hands to seize it; when, as our poor lover's ill-luck would have it, another butterfly of a greyish complexion, having got sight of the blue one, instantly sprung upon her with a boldness consistent with the genius of that coquettish tribe; and in the very teeth of his rival took such liberties with the azure princess—such liberties as possibly he supposed were the more allowable, from having never once taken it into his head that the fair volatile before him could be a princess.

Startled, as may easily be imagined at this temerity of the grey butterfly, Don Sylvio burst into a rage, which was so much the more violent, as he fancied he could discern in the blue butterfly's resistance a new reason to persuade him it was his princess. He therefore threw himself in between them, and was fortunate enough to knock down his rival with a little switch he had in his hand.

This circumstance however, so terrified the supposed princess, that with all the wings she had she instantly darted away, pursued by Don Sylvio and Pedrillo. In vain did they run, and strain, and puff, and blow; the more they followed her, the faster she fled from them, perhaps supposing herself to be still pursued by the grey-coated inamorato.

It happened, oddly enough, that three or four girls of a neighbouring village, after fatiguing themselves with mowing grass, were set down upon the river-side to refresh them in the shade; and by way of

amusement, exercised their fancy in making garlands of the flowers that grew in vast quantities just beside them.

The blue butterfly had left its persecutors so far behind that they could hardly keep sight of it. Hence, fancying itself out of danger, it began to be composed, and resumed its sportive dance from flower to flower; till at length, behold, it fell into the hands of one of those hay-making girls, who took and fastened a thread to its leg, and then let it fly as it pleased round about her.

Don Sylvio by this time was got near enough to observe all that passed, and addressing Pedrillo: "Now," said he, "at last I perceive the issue of that dream, which yesterday morning so puzzled me to explain it. It was a warning from my friend the fairy, who made me foresee in my dream what now awaits me, in order that I may take my measures accordingly, so as not to fall into the snares of my enemies. Do but observe that nymph yonder sitting under the shade, holding the blue butterfly, fastened with a thread, and flying about her."

"A nymph, say you?" answered Pedrillo; "deuce take it, signior, sure you are only laughing at me. Why, that creature there is just as much like a nymph as I am like a bottle of hay. She is only a country wench, just as the others that sit under the trees beside her."

"I am already too much accustomed to thy blundering conduct," replied Don Sylvio, "to make myself angry at this impertinence. I know what I am to think of the matter, thanks to the fairy Radiante; and whatever thou shalt take her for, nymph or rustic, I tell thee she shall yield me up my princess, or I will lose my life."

"Signior," said Pedrillo, "whenever there's anything to do about salamanders and sylphids, or

about spirits, or other things of that sort, which are quite above the reach of a common man, there I'll readily give up to your honour, and I'll own to you with all my heart, that I am sure you understand such matters better than I: but, as to country-folks, 'tis quite another affair; for surely I must be able to know somewhat about those things. Besides, 'tis impossible to be deceived in a case of this kind, for you may even smell these honest wenches at least thirty foot off. Now, I should be glad to know when you ever met with any nymphs that smelled of garlic, or their petticoats so rent and tattered that you may see their smocks every way you look at them. In short, signior, I tell you 'tis a downright country wench, ay, and one of the nastiest too that ever you saw in your life. She'll yield you up the blue butterfly, never fear; and if you'll but give her a few maravedis, will return you a thousand 'thank ye's' and 'God bless ye's' into the bargain."

Don Sylvio, who never listened to reason, when once he had got anything into his head, did not deign the least attention to what Pedrillo said; but, marching up to the supposed nymph, demanded of her his butterfly.

"And what will you give me for it, signior?" said the girl, laughing.

"Whatever thou wilt," replied Don Sylvio.

"Oh, very well; then pray give me the little toy that hangs about your neck," said the nymph; "I'll give it to my little sister at home, and if you'll but put half a real to it, the butterfly and the thread are both yours."

"Cursed Green Dwarf!" cried Don Sylvio, drawing his sabre, and foaming with rage; "hope not, that under that borrowed shape, which sufficiently proves thy cowardice, thou canst mock me with impunity. Die, thou wretch! or restore me the

butterfly, to which thou hast no right or claim, and which I will tear from thy accursed heart, though it should cost me my life."

It will easily be imagined, that to an apostrophe so ungracious, and accompanied with terrible menaces, the fair nymph before him could make no other reply than by crying out with all her might. Pedrillo, whom his master's folly had almost worked up into a violent passion, threw himself forward between the nymph and our hero, endeavouring at the same time to disarm his master, on finding him deaf to all his remonstrances. Meanwhile the other nymphs, seeing their companion so roughly treated, came up in a great hurry, and fell like furies both upon Don Sylvio and Pedrillo; insomuch that our hero had the greatest difficulty in the world to defend himself against their violent hands and forked nails.

Unfortunately, the lover of the young nymph mistaken for the Green Dwarf, was at work with two or three other peasants in the neighbouring fields. The lamentable cries of the women, and the countenance of his mistress, whom Pedrillo was just going to pull by the hair, put him in such a fury, that he run up to them, accompanied by his fellow labourers. The first thing he did was to wrench Pedrillo's large staff out of his hands; which done, he thrashed our adventurers in so emphatical a manner, that, in spite of their vigorous defence, at length they yielded to the multitude of their enemies. This exploit, however, did not yet appear sufficient to the furious lover, or the young wench, who breathed nothing but revenge; nor was their rage satisfied, till after having so battered our adventurers with fisticuffs, that the peasants themselves began to think that they had gone too far. Matters being brought to this state, the nymph made herself mistress of our hero's trinket, as he lay almost breathless on the ground, which she

did to indemnify herself for the butterfly, who, from the commencement of the fray, had taken wing. This done, the rustic assembly quitted the field, leaving our poor adventurers half dead, extended upon the grass.

BOOK V

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR HAS THE PLEASURE TO TALK ABOUT HIMSELF

WE very much doubt whether, since fairy tales first existed in the world, there ever was a lover protected by fairies—whether he were prince, knight, or shepherd, that saw or felt himself in such critical circumstances as those in which we left our hero at the close of the preceding book.

'Tis true, other heroes, travelling under the auspices of fairies, have their tribulations likewise: they are often obliged to wage war with dragons, sea monsters, blue centaurs, and the like: they run the risk of being devoured by hyenas and chimeras; they are brought up by old toothless fairies, who put their virtue to the keenest trials, and at last turn them into paroquets, cats, or crickets. But, that ever a person so extraordinary as the favourite of a queen of the salamanders, and the lover of an enchanted blue butterfly, should be so terribly scratched and mauled by a parcel of country wenches, is what you may in vain look for an example of in the whole collection of all those histories, that begin with that elegant phrase, there was once upon a time.

The benevolent reader will deduce the consequence; but, as perhaps he may not do so, the author hereby begs leave to inform him, that this palpable difference between the history of Don

Sylvio, and all other tales of the fairies, inculcates a very favourable prepossession in regard to the historical fidelity and veridicity of the writer. Had we made our hero travel in a sapphire car, drawn by birds of paradise; had we made him descend every evening to some enchanted palace; had we given him the little red hat of Prince Hobgoblin, or the fairy Mustachio's slipper, or King Gyges' ring, or the royal fairy Trusio's enchanted wand, by means of which he might have extricated himself from all difficulties, then every child of ten years old must have perceived we had only been entertaining him with a fairy tale. But though our history is more extraordinary and more marvellous than any of those with which they once upon a time endeavoured to amuse the sage Schac Baham, Sultan of the Indies, yet nobody can reproach us with ever having made any adventure befall our hero that does not perfectly coincide with the ordinary course of nature, or that may not be seen to happen every day: as for instance, that a frog should run the hazard of being swallowed up by a stork, or that a person should find a picture set round with diamonds, which probably some other might have lost before. Besides, we have made our hero travel afoot, without having even taken care to guard him against bogs and ditches. Has he been asleep?—It was only upon the hard ground, or in a miserable inn, where he is half devoured by fleas. Instead of nymphs with rosy arms, or sylphs with golden wings, to serve him with nectar and ambrosia on the flowery borders of crystal fountains, we have fed him with a pie, found in Pedrillo's wallet; and, still more recently, we have seen him almost knocked at head, not by giants or enchanted blackamoors, but by simple country clowns.

We flatter ourselves that what has been said will serve as convincing proofs to the gentle reader; most sincerely wishing we could say as much, and

as justly, of many a famous historian, and show them to have been as distant from that propensity to imposition, which leads them to embellish their pictures and characters, or to give their adventures a smack of the marvellous, as we are ourselves; whose whole aim in the publication of this very faithful and credible history has been, not (as some giddy hare-brained young people may possibly have supposed) merely to divert our readers, but rather to promote their public health and welfare, both of body and mind.

Perhaps some of those, whose sagacity can penetrate no further than the superficies of things, may not be able to comprehend how the history of Don Sylvio should avail to so salutary a purpose. To us nothing could be easier than to prove to them, as well from the writings of the greatest physicians, as from those of natural philosophers, "that there is a certain fever to which the human mind is very subject, from the fourteenth year of man's existence up to his grand climacteric: that this fever cannot so efficaciously be expelled by any other remedy, as by that which at once shakes the diaphragm, thins the blood, and vivifies the animal spirits; just as the envenomed bite of a tarantula can be cured only by the symphatic virtue of certain airs, which are played to the sick folks to set them a-dancing." We could also very easily, and upon very good authorities, demonstrate to them, that the same salutary virtues here mentioned lie concealed in this present history. But, as this might carry us too far from the continuation of our hero's adventures, to the great displeasure of our readers, we rather wish to leave it to their own discretion to judge of the matter as they shall think best. However, in the second edition of this work—which, without vanity, and judging from the good taste of the public, we foresee can be no very distant event—we shall not fail to insert Parera, of the College of

Physicians, upon the subject: that Parera, who knows how to turn everything to our advantage. And for his fuller confirmation, we shall subjoin a detail of the various remarkable cures, which the physicians of our acquaintance have made by means of this book.

Over and above all this, we should be very glad if some Academy in Europe, (were it even that Pau in Béarn) would condescend to offer a premium of fifty ducats for an investigation of that utility, physical, moral, and political, which society in general might derive from writings calculated to make people laugh, in a decent manner, I mean. An examination of the following question in particular, would certainly merit the premium, viz.: Whether the public good, as well as booksellers' profit, (which, 'tis well known, is so considerable a branch of commerce in Europe), would not turn to better account, if, instead of that quantity of vile productions in morality, great or small, which their tedious authors pour in upon the world, under pompous titles, and which, at bottom, are nothing more than trite observations, lame thoughts, badly compiled and ill-digested, cold declamations, etc.—whether, I say, if, instead of those, we were to produce every six months some dozen of books in the taste of the *Roman Comique*, the *Bachelor of Salamanca*, or the *Foundling*; nay, or even in the taste of *Candide*, *Garagantua* and *Pantagruel*; books in which truth is spoken laughingly; books which tear off the false mask from stupidity, fanaticism, and rascality; books which exhibit mankind in their true light and just proportion, with their passions and follies about them, and without the least addition or diminution; books which remove from the actions of men that varnish wherewith they are so ingenious to cover them, while at the same time they are all the offspring of pride, private views, and a voluntary self-delusion; books, in short,

which instruct and correct their readers so much the more successfully, as they seem to be intended merely for amusement; and which, even though they served only to divert and recreate persons deeply engaged in business, or innocently to amuse persons of no business at all, and in a general view, to keep people in good-humour; such books, I insist upon it, would be of infinitely more use to the public, than that insipid species of morality, that systematical jumble of misshapen whimsical ideas; those phlegmatic and fanatical monkeries, now under contemplation; and which (no affront to their authors' good intentions, of which they make such parade) puzzle more brains than they correct hearts; and the possible pernicious effects of which nothing could prevent from being formidable, but the common practice of cutting them to pieces to pack up other books.

For certain reasons we could have been glad to have placed these remarks to the account of Pedrillo, or some other privileged person; for nobody blames a Pedrillo, or a Launcelot Gobbo, or Gobbo Launcelot, when he speaks the truth. But as this could not be managed conveniently, we were obliged to pluck up a resolution and do it ourselves, as it were by the bye; offering at the same time our humble deprecations, and hoping for the best allowances, in whatever place, or to whatever person, they shall seem necessary.

CHAPTER II

WHEREIN PEDRILLO DISPLAYS HIMSELF TO GREAT ADVANTAGE

THOUGH Pedrillo had much the severest share of drubbing in the skirmish with the country clowns, he came first to himself again, after lying upon the ground a full half-quarter of an hour, quite stunned with the blows he had received. The first use he made of his senses was to give to the devil all the nymphs, fauns, sylvans, dwarfs, princesses and butterflies, with every fairy tale that had been told from the creation, and ever should be to the end of the world; together with their authors, abettors, and relators; not forgetting their kinsfolk and right heirs, in the ascending and descending line all together, and every one in particular. Such was his mighty wrath and fiery indignation! Next did he curse every goose, whose quills had administered to the writings of all such tales; nor less did he execrate the letters and the ink employed in printing them: wishing from the very bottom of his heart, that the Holy Inquisition might reduce to dust and ashes all who had given utterance to such confounded devil's tricks, which had only served to turn the head of the noblest and bravest young gentleman in all Spain, For now the blows he had received without number or measure, and all for the love of a blue butterfly, fully convinced him, that whatever his master had told him about the fairy Radiante, and the enchantment of his pretended princess, was nothing but a parcel of dreams and

foolish fancies. "Pox take it!" he cried, "when did ever a fairy allow country fellows and country wenches to knock people down, after she had once taken them under her protection? Indeed, if one had been obliged to fight with monsters, or dragons spitting fire out of their nostrils, nothing could have been said to it. But to think that such low ragged devils—Ads death! I'll consent to be swallowed up by the first monster we meet with, if this Radiante of his that has played us this trick, to name no more, is not just as much a fairy as the three jades that have almost scratched my eyes out with their nails, are nymphs——"

At this emphatical rate he ran on for a good while, till, looking about, he observed his master still lying stretched along beside him, without life or motion. His countenance, with the fear of his being quite dead, made the poor fellow instantly forget his own misfortunes. At first he called his master by his name, then he shook him; but still finding no signs of life in him, he began to cry as piteously, or more so, than the wicked king's son Hunchback did, when the girl that tended the geese refused to marry him.

In this distress, however, he presently recollected a bottle of Madeira in his knapsack, which luckily the enemy had not perceived in the heat of their engagement; Pedrillo having prudently thought of laying it down a little way off just before the onset. Accordingly, he took the bottle, and, without the least regret, threw the wine into Don Sylvio's face. This expedient had the desired effect, and our hero soon came to his senses; for it seems his disaster proceeded only from a single blow, well applied indeed, but which had done him no other harm than the raising a large tumour upon his head. At length he opened his eyes, and asked with a feeble voice, "Where am I? Art thou still alive, Pedrillo?"

"Yes, my dear master," said he, "and you too,

thank Heaven! or my eyes deceive me. But upon the faith of an honest lad, look you, sir, had you been dead, as I really thought you were, I would sooner have jumped into the river than have wished to survive you."

"Would it were in my power immediately to reward thee for thy fidelity and kind concern!" replied Don Sylvio; "but tell me, if thou knowest, Pedrillo, what is become of my princess? O Heavens!——"

"The princess?" cried Pedrillo; "she is got off, and gone to the devil; she flew away the moment that those fat-cheeked nymphs fell upon us with their crooked claws: deuce take her, I could only wish she did but feel—— But, pray, what's the matter with you, signior? Mercy on me! My dear master, what ails you?—Oh, the cursed fairies!"

The reason of Pedrillo's uttering these lamentations was, that his master, having looked for the princess's picture, and not finding it, instantly fell into a swoon, overwhelmed with terror and despair.

It was with very great difficulty he could recover our hero to any sense or spirits; and much more to soothe the desperation to which he gave himself up the moment he was capable of feeling the greatness of his loss. Pedrillo, however desirous he might be to pour out invectives against the fairy Radiante, and all the fairies in the universe, or to divest his master of that mad passion for a butterfly, no longer knew what to do or say, on hearing Don Sylvio send forth such bitter lamentations; more especially too, when he found him resolving to make the river Guadalaviar famous by his death. He therefore threw himself at his feet, wept, railed at all fairies and the science of fairy, begged and prayed of him; but alas! the one did him no manner of good, and the other only served to make him worse.

After having in vain attempted every imaginable



method, he at last hit upon the only remedy that could promise him success in such a circumstance. This was to set up a crying in concert with his master, and this he did so well, as if possible, to exceed him. He reasoned in this manner, "My young master will at length be tired of making lamentations, and provided I do but let him get over the first fits of his frenzy, remonstrances may possibly be brought on, to compose his troubled spirits."

Accordingly, the moment he found Don Sylvio cease to complain, he began, though contrary to his own conviction, to ruminate in his brain the best means to soothe our hero's mind. He assured him that even if his princess's portrait was in the hands of the Green Dwarf, though that was very unlikely, yet the princess, as to her person, was still safe and sound, for he had seen her with his own eyes take her flight. "Believe me, my dear master," continued he, "the fairy Rademante only means to try your patience: things will soon change their face; while there is life there's hope. Besides, don't you suppose that other princes or cavaliers have been treated full as bad, or worse than yourself? Only think of what the blue bird suffered before his deliverance from the villainous Forella, and yet at last he was put in possession of his dear Florina; and what a deal of trouble and difficulty did the Prince Hunchback go through before he could unite his fortunes with those of the beautiful Brillianta, whom the black enchanter had changed into a grasshopper; though, by the bye, she was full as good a princess as others that I don't choose to name. And therefore, signior, I can't see any reason you can have to toss yourself neck-deep into the water, or into a cave full of toads and lizards, like the brothers of the Princess Rosetta. You have not been turned into an animal, like the prince of the fortunate island, nor have you ever been in danger of being devoured by monsters and

hyenas as Prince Amatus was. In short, signior, let me tell you, I have just as much reason to complain, and as bitterly too, as you yourself. I don't know why the Lady Rademante should favour me so much, not I: but this I am sure of, I have received ten times more blows than you; and besides, the princess who is to make me amends for it is still unborn. If you suffer, you know at least why you suffer; but there's nobody to give poor Pedrillo the least word of comfort; and yet in every unlucky scrape, he is always certain to come in for the worst share of drubbing. But no matter for that, I shan't complain; though, to tell you the truth, these cursed scoundrels have so turned my poor back, that it is become as soft as my belly: however, once for all, 'tis my fate, and if so be you are easy, signior, that's enough for me. I will never forsake your honour so long as Heaven shall spare me, and while I have a rib unbroke in your honour's service."

These remonstrances, to which Pedrillo's good heart added great weight and emphasis, together with the certainty not only that the princess lived, but was at full liberty, so effectually operated upon our hero by degrees, that he began to recover his spirits. He said some very obliging things to Pedrillo in consequence of the devotion he had testified to his service, assuring him that if he ever was so happy as to obtain the desired object, his first care should be to reward his integrity, and to make him such amends for the inconveniences he had suffered out of regard for him, as to leave him nothing to wish for on that head. These consolatory promises, notwithstanding the little likelihood at present of their being accomplished, rejoiced Pedrillo's grateful heart to such a degree, that he could readily have forgot his late hearty beating, had not his back been so unpolite as to put him in mind of it every moment.

Things being in this state, Pedrillo used all his endeavours to re-animate his master. He chose out the most shady spot close by the river, and there they determined to stay awhile, till they were quite come to themselves again.

Don Sylvio felt himself too much affected at the loss of his beloved's picture to be sensible of any thing else. Every moment he renewed his dolorous complainings, and it necessarily took him some time before he could determine to become Pedrillo's second in consuming the provisions of their knapsack, notwithstanding hunger loudly called upon him. Among the provisions they met with one more bottle of Malaga wine, that came very opportunely in their present uncomfortable situation, and it soon restored honest Pedrillo to such good humour, that he could no longer bear with his master's gloomy countenance. "Courage, Signior Don Sylvio!" he cried; "bad luck ought to have good spirits, anybody can laugh when fortune smiles: then let us be gay while we may. Courage! signior, one good wedding will pay for all. Chance is changeable, and every dog has his day. One hour comes with a whole volley of dry blows; the next hour we may swim in pleasure. My grandmother always used to say, 'So goes the world; so many days, so many tribulations: but everything comes round as long as people have but patience; for Rome was not built in a day.' Methinks now, it is as if I saw you as gay as a linnet, in the peaceable possession of your princess; but not like a miserable butterfly, an't please you; no, no, but like a beautiful princess made of flesh and blood, just as she came out of her mother: ay, and by such tokens too, look'ye, that I can see her now as it were, with a rich gold crown upon her head, wrapped up in a royal mantle set with pearls and carbuncles, and shining like the sun. Oh! how will our hearts then leap for joy: then indeed, they that have much

shall have more; we shall have nothing but days of feasting and rejoicing, and the moment we open our mouths, it will be, 'What's your pleasure?' We shall dance, and jump, and laugh, and divert ourselves, were all the Carabossas and Fanfreluches to burst themselves out of spite, at seeing us in such good spirits. Once more then, signior, courage! Devil's in't, what shall we want with her picture, when we have the princess herself? This would be my way of thinking, was it my own affair; and what is more, I could freely take my oath, that the Green Dwarf has just as much seen your trinket, as he has seen the maid of fourscore, whom he was to serve for a tooth-pick; for, surely, my eyes are none of the worst; and I think I can pretty well distinguish a woman from a slip of wood. I tell you, signior, the nymph was a poor country wench, and I'm as positively sure of it, as if I had made her myself. If you won't believe me, you have still one way more to come at the truth, and soon too. The village where the girl lives can't be a hundred leagues off. We'll go there this evening, and seek about till we have found her; and then, if there's any justice to be had for love or money, I warrant you we'll get our picture from her."

"But if this be so," said Don Sylvio, "whence arises that singular conformity between our late adventure, and my yesterday's dream?"

"Signior," replied Pedrillo, "I remember your dream as well as if I had dreamt it myself; but for the soul of me, I can see none of that conformity which you find in it; for where is the sylphid that appeared to you? Where is the chariot of roses, drawn by twelve ruby-coloured birds of paradise, that conducted you to the enchanted island? And yet that's a material point, which we know nothing of. And then you said that the nymph held the blue butterfly by a golden thread; now this too is wrong, for the thread that the girl here made use of,

was only such a one, as perhaps she intended to have mended her smock with; and there, o' my conscience, I think she would not have been wrong, for her skin peeped out on all sides. I'll be hanged if it was not as black as soot, and I have always heard say that nymphs had a complexion and a skin like lilies and roses. But to sum up the matter, it is of no mighty consequence whether she was a nymph or any thing else. All I know of it for certain, is, that the blows we have received from these great loobies were not given us in a dream. But I don't love to bear malice. What is done is done. Here's to the princess's health, wherever she be, and I hope one day or other she'll make us full amends for all we have suffered for her sake."

CHAPTER III

DON SYLVIO'S INWARD STRUGGLE WITH HIMSELF

TEASED with Pedrillo's loquacity, Don Sylvio pretended to take a nap during the heat of the day, in order to get rid of him, and reduce him to silence. Accordingly, he dissembled sleep, and Pedrillo soon followed the example in good earnest. Don Sylvio's perturbation was an effectual bar to his own indulgence. A thousand unpleasant ideas that intruded themselves in spite of him, at length brought him to that irksome state, that now, for the first time in his life, he began to doubt the reality of his fond conceits. "How is this?" said he; "what if the pretended apparition of the fairy Radiante should be only the sport of a heated imagination?" The more he reflected on this supposition, the more probable he found it; and the late unlucky adventure with the clowns, whom he was now strongly inclined to take for what they really were, in a few minutes changed that probability into certainty; for it seemed to him incomprehensible that the fairy Radiante, if she had indeed granted him her protection, should thus have abandoned him to the fisticuffs of such a rabble.

These doubts made him exceedingly uneasy. He collected all the forces of his understanding to beat them off; but still they returned to the charge with redoubled impetuosity, and the tumult they excited in his brain became so violent, as greatly to endanger the total loss of that small residue of good sense which fairy science had left him.

In this afflicting situation the image of his beloved mistress was the only object to support his misgiving and harassed mind; the only thing that remained unshaken amidst this general vertigo of his ideas. "If all the rest," cried he, "is mere illusion, yet still, thou dear unknown in person and in name, still am I sure that I sincerely love thee, and here is no deception. Whether a fairy therefore has thrown thy picture in my way, or friendly chance alone produced the event; whether thou art a princess or a shepherdess; whether thou art destined for me, or wert once beloved by some more happy mortal: O thou, the fairest nymph under the cope of heaven, if my fate will have it so that deprived of thee I still must languish, yet never shall it tear thy image from my heart. Through every land and sea I'll seek thee round the globe. From Pole to Pole I'll urge my fond pursuits; from the Cimmerian Mountains, clad in eternal snows, even to the torrid zone, where neither shady tree, nor cooling fountain tempers the sultry heat; and if there I find thee not, and this low earth has lost thee, its chiefest ornament—what then shall hinder my unwearied spirit, still constantly aspiring to possess thee, and elevated by the power of deathless love, to take its aerial flight from sphere to sphere, and there to seek thee where thine alone eclipses all these numberless beauties of ether? Or who shall forbid me to descend the subterraneous regions and there explore thee amidst those happy shades, who, by thy eyes enlightened, no more regret the beams of day, sipping from thy looks a sweet oblivion of all their other wishes."

These dithyrambic thoughts, fond and frantic as they may seem to our grave readers, wrought, however, so salutary an effect upon our hero, that they lulled him insensibly into a sound slumber; the only circumstance in his present state that could afford him consolation: for what better can await

the wretched, than "Timid Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep?"

For this once Don Sylvio found a double advantage from sleeping; first, an oblivion of his cares, and next, the happiness of a pleasing dream; which, at least for the time it lasted, had the same effect upon him as if it had been ever so real. He imagined he saw his dear princess, not under the form of a nymph or a butterfly, but in her own shape, attired like a goddess: she was reclined upon a rose-coloured cloud, that hung a little above the earth very near him. The princess talked with him a long time; she conjured him not to lose courage; requested him, on the contrary, manfully to resist the obstacles which their enemies interposed against them; and assured him that the period was not far remote, when her real shape, under which she now appeared to him, should be restored to her by his means; adding, in a manner equally tender and obliging, that she could wish herself a thousand times more amiable, were it but to reward the troubles he had necessarily undergone to gain possession of her person and of her heart. Don Sylvio was just going to make her the same reply that every lover must have had ready for so flattering a declaration, when, all on a sudden, the fair phantom disappeared.

This circumstance was indeed the most unpleasant of the whole dream. But the pleasure of having beheld his lovely object, joined to that soft and consolatory tone of voice which still seemed to sound in his enchanted ear, rendered him insensible to every thing less palatable. He forgot all his past anxieties, despised all those that were to come, and now thought of nothing else but to pursue a journey, every step in which brought him still nearer and nearer to the summit of his wishes. Accordingly, he awaked Pedrillo, and after relating to him his vision with

a very joyful heart, ordered him to get ready for decamping.

"God bless my soul!" cried Pedrillo; "why, this now is very droll. Only think how much our dreams are alike. You have had a vision of the princess, and I have had an apparition of the sylphid. Methought I found her lying upon a bed of roses, in the very spot where you lay yesterday; but the fairy, her mistress, was not there. Well, now I do repent that I did not ask her name: but how should I, when we had so many other things to talk of. I vow the time slid away without our perceiving it. We were at least three or four hours together, and the sun went to bed unnoticed by either of us; and yet methinks, it seemed but a moment. I really fancied I was a sylph myself. If it was for my life I cannot tell you what I felt at the time; but sure it is, I never in my life felt anything like it. Now did not I always say that fortune would smile one day or other? These dreams are certainly no chance work, and who knows still what may happen? Perhaps Madam Rademante may make us amends all at once for having neglected us so long. 'We shall see,' said the blind man: ''tis a long lane that has no turning.' However, this I can assure you positively, signior, that if ever the Green Dwarf falls into my hands, I'll pay him the handy cuffs he has bestowed upon us to-day, and with interest too. This I'm determined, without fail; so let him look to it if he wishes to save his bones."

CHAPTER IV

PEDRILLO'S PREDICTIONS BEGIN TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

WHILE Pedrillo thus gave free scope to his talkative faculties, our adventurers pursued their walk close beside a forest of chesnut-trees, which, the farther they went, had more and more the appearance of a park. Here and there they perceived large alcoves of evergreens, with fountains, grottos, and old ruins that seemed to make their way through thickets of roses, jasmines, and honeysuckles; at length, after about half an hour's march, they found themselves in a kind of labyrinth composed of rose-bushes and myrtles, the alleys of which were so artificially interwoven one within another, that they had much ado to get out of it.

These appearances left our travellers no room to doubt of their being pretty near some fairy castle, and they fancied themselves already entering upon a great adventure.

Pedrillo, for his part, instantly exclaimed, "There, did not I tell you that the fairy Rademante would soon set us to rights? You see now, signior, whether we should have done well to throw ourselves into the river, and all for the sake of that cursed tribe of enchanters, as you certainly would have done, had not I prevented you. The best that could have happened to us beneath the stream might have been for some nymph or siren to have changed us into hydras or dolphins; whereas now we may hope to pass the night in a castle of crystal or

diamonds; to lie down upon silken mattresses, and to be waited upon by beautiful sylphids, the least of them loaded with pearls and jewels that would buy a little kingdom.

As Pedrillo said this, they came forward into a large walk of orange-trees, at the end of which they perceived a superb pavilion, whose folding doors, standing half open, presented to their view a grand hall, wherein they could see the windows, gilding, and rich furniture sparkling so brilliantly on all sides, that by the help of the setting sun which shone full against them, they already from far dazzled the eyes of Pedrillo.

Highly transported as he was at this sight, he could not however help being a little startled at the idea of approaching a place, where all seemed the work of enchantment. The nearer he came to the pavilion, the more his heart beat within him. Don Sylvio himself, who in other respects was not timid, appeared for some time irresolute what to do; for he had already so many proofs of the malice and indefatigable wickedness of his enemies, as rendered him uncertain, whether, under these gay appearances, there might not be some new trap laid to ensnare him. However, the comfortable assurances which his dear princess had lately given him, soon banished all his fears; and though he could discern no living soul, except a few parrots flying about the gilt balustrade that surrounded the hall, yet that did not hinder him from entering to see what this adventure would lead to.

But what was his astonishment, when, on coming into the hall, whose beauty and furniture seemed worthy of a fairy, he perceived a quantity of cats of different colours, who by their gesture seemed to proclaim that they were the sole inhabitants of this superb palace. Some were lying upon rich brocaded cushions, others were composedly walking amongst the flower-pots and Chinese pagodas that decorated

the chimney; and others seemed to be employed in paying their court to a charming little white cat, adorned with a pearl collar, and stretched negligently along upon a pink-coloured sofa embroidered with silver.

At a sight like this, a man more of a sage than Don Sylvio would have called to mind the palace of Felisalba, or the White Cat, one of the finest fairy tales we have. But when the cats, thus reclined on their cushions, regaled him on his entering the hall with a symphony in their own style, he had no longer a doubt, agreeably to his mode of reasoning, but that he was now in that very palace where a certain prince, whom the story gives no name to, spent three years (which to him seemed to be no more than three single days) in company with a very lively, virtuous, and tender white cat, which at last turned out to be a most beautiful princess.

Exceedingly great was Don Sylvio's joy at so fortunate an accident; for, not to mention the obliging reception he was to expect in this noble mansion, the white cat's goodness of heart and generosity of temper were too well known, to leave him a moment's doubt, but she would grant him every assistance that lay in her power, in order to bring his various enterprises to an happy issue.

Full of these sentiments, our hero approached the sofa on which the delicate little white cat lay, and was just upon the point of addressing her with all the respect due to a cat of such high birth and singular qualities, when all at once a door opened, through which, to the great amazement of Pedrillo, the little sylphid, whom he had seen in the forest the day before, put forward her head. If so unexpected an apparition confounded Pedrillo, it had no less effect upon the sylphid. No sooner did she perceive our adventurers, than setting up a loud shriek, she drew back her head, shut to the door

after her, and fled away with as much precipitation as if she had seen a spectre.

Don Sylvio knew not what to think of this mode of appearing and disappearing; but Pedrillo presently relieved him from his perplexity. "Well, look'ye there now, signior," he cried; "be of good cheer, our dreams are made out. Give yourself no more trouble about any thing; she will not be long before she comes back, and she ran away so fast only to acquaint the fairy with our arrival."

"Who art thou speaking of?" demanded Don Sylvio, taking him aside, and whispering very softly.

"Deuce take it! who would you have me be speaking of, but of that sylphid who peeped at us but a moment ago through the door; and who, I'll give you my oath, is the very same sylphid that I saw yesterday standing beside you near the rose bushes: nay, and what's more, 'tis the very she that appeared to me to-day in my dream."

"Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio, "I am greatly deceived, or we are now in the palace of the white cat, who is a great princess and a fairy at the same time. Now if this sylphid whom thou art acquainted with, belongs to this palace, very probably the fairy thou sawest yesterday is the white cat herself."

"I can't tell what you mean by your white cat," answered Pedrillo; "but I hope you won't suppose that the little pussy upon the sofa there, making wry faces, is a fairy——"

"Don't speak so loud," interrupted Don Sylvio, "and know, once for all, that in such places as that where we now are, one cannot be too circumspect or too cautious."

Don Sylvio had hardly done speaking the last words, when Pedrillo began to cry aloud, jumping and capering about like a mad thing. The cause of this phenomenon, it seems, was one of the villainous parrots, that kept the cats company in

these apartments; for this same parrot, whether it did not greatly like Pedrillo's physiognomy, or for other reasons, which for aught we know were never yet discovered, thought proper to give him a slight scratch with her claw as she came by him; accordingly, Pedrillo, who did not immediately observe the author of this piece of gallantry, solemnly protested that the stroke must have come from some hobgoblin or invisible dwarf.

"Take it then," said Don Sylvio, "as the wages of thy late impertinent chatter. It is but a slight correction given thee by one of those invisible hands which minister to the visitants of this palace."

"Pox take it," cried Pedrillo, "but this is a scurvy fashion of ministering to honest people. If this was a hand, I am sure its nails have not been cut these seven years. I can assure your honour, the grip of a young satyr's claws could not go deeper into one's flesh. The deuce is in it, if one is to meet with such rough salutes for every word that is not well-weighed beforehand, I must e'en be forced to sew up my mouth, or these malicious hobgoblins will have forced out all the letters of the alphabet upon my face before the day is over."

"In truth," said Don Sylvio, "thou canst do nothing better here, than to act the part of a mute; for in the way thou goest on, I'll not answer for it but that worse accidents may befall thee; not to mention the little share of honour thou wilt do me by thy impertinent prate, as well as by thy low expressions, and thy continual swearing at every sentence."

"Very well," said Pedrillo, "a word to the wise is enough; and since you think it right, I'll be as mute as a fish; I'll play my part well, I warrant you. But, hist! I hear somebody coming. Ha! did not I tell you so? There—hist—'tis the fairy her own self."

CHAPTER V

APPARITION OF THE FAIRY. 'TIS A VERY DANGEROUS THING TO MEET WITH A WOMAN TOO MUCH LIKE ONE'S MISTRESS.

It is now exactly two and forty minutes, eighteen seconds, by the English clock set up at Geneva, that we have sat puzzling to find out half a dozen fine new comparisons, by the help of which, if need were, a poet might endeavour to paint the highest degree of astonishment and surprise. But we have not been lucky enough to find a single one, but what, by having passed through so many hands from the days of old Homer to our own times, is so worn out as to be really good for nothing.

For this once therefore, all we do in the matter must be to avail ourselves of a certain figure in rhetoric, which we borrow from one of the best writers of dedicatory epistles, and shall accordingly say as follows: Neither the affright of an imprudent boy, who, having, put his hand into a hole unexpectedly, lays hold of a serpent; nor the terror of a young husband, who, the morning after his nuptials, instead of that amiable and beautiful girl of whom he was enamoured, found her ugly sister lying by his side; nor the confusion of a judge, at the sight of a silver cup filled with bright Hungarian ducats, by which his client, who understands life perfectly well, enables him to comprehend the justice of his own cause; not these, nor all of these, are sufficient to express a tenth part of the perturbation which Don Sylvio felt on beholding, in the person of the fairy

of this enchanted castle, the original of his mistress's portrait. But stop, methinks this were saying too much; for Don Sylvio, having now fully persuaded himself from his late dream, that his mistress was still a butterfly, his confusion arose merely from seeing how striking a resemblance there was between her and this same fairy.

Donna Felicia (for we neither choose, nor can we any longer conceal that we are now at Lirias), had taken care to present herself to our hero in a dress which, while it discovered her charms to the greatest advantage, gave her at the same time so singular an air, that she wanted nothing more than a little ebony wand to represent the fairy Luminosa in the exactest manner imaginable.

She was just got to her toilet to dress herself, expecting the arrival of her brother with an unexpected party, when Laura brought her the surprising news, that Don Sylvio, nobody knew how, had made his appearance in the hall.

That happy instinct, which in the heart of ladies makes up for long reflections, presently suggested to her, that if she hoped to increase the impression which she wished to make upon our hero, the more she appeared like a fairy so much the better.

Accordingly, she paid him her compliments with that noble and gracious air suitable to her character, though it required no little self-violence to conceal the flutter that agitated her heart. She professed herself much indebted to the good fortune which had led to her country-seat a young gentleman whose mien sufficiently proclaimed him to have no common share of merit; at the same time assuring him that her brother, whose arrival she every minute expected, would be extremely happy in making so agreeable an acquaintance.

Had Don Sylvio met with nothing more to combat than the surprise of finding so perfect a resemblance between his picture and the fairy before him, it

might not have been so difficult for him to keep his countenance. But nature, who never gives up her prerogatives, and at the long run always gains the victory over imagination, played him such a trick in this critical minute, as was totally beyond his power to obviate or elude.

Poor Don Sylvio had taken the impression which his pretended princess's portrait had made upon him, as well as the desires it had excited in his heart, for love. But in this he was deceived; it was no more than a weak anticipation, a mere vain shadow of that love with which the original alone could inspire him.

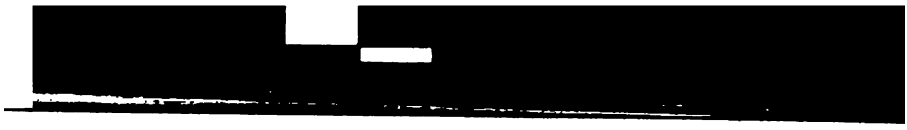
The first glance of Donna Felicia's eye that met Don Sylvio's seemed, as it were, to throw both their souls into a confusion. The mighty force of that inexpressible ecstasy wherewith a sympathetic love, especially at first sight of the beloved object, knows how to intoxicate a feeling soul—a soul disposed for this kind of happy enthusiasm — instantly penetrated, filled up, and took possession of his whole being. All his former ideas seemed utterly effaced; new senses suddenly developed themselves as it were in the very bottom of his soul, and greedily grasped at all those countless charms which shone with full radiance upon him. In a word, he was transported to that degree as to be able to make no other reply to the pretended fairy's obliging apostrophe, than by stammering out a few broken and incoherent syllables.

In all probability Donna Felicia might not have been so well satisfied with the finest-turned compliment as she was with that infinitely more eloquent confusion which she discovered in our hero. What passed in her own heart very abundantly supplied all that was defective and unintelligible in his discourse; but, as she had more command of herself (or, to speak more clearly, as she was a woman), she not only knew

how to conceal her perturbation, but had even the politeness to give him time to come to his senses. So, seating herself first upon a sofa, and begging him to take his place beside her in a large elbow chair, she took the little white cat up into her lap, and began to divert him by talking of the ideas which must have arisen in his mind on entering the hall. "Pray tell me, Don Sylvio," said she, "did not you find it rather difficult to divest yourself of the thought that you were in the palace of the white cat, the moment you saw so considerable an assembly of the species all paying their court to my little favourite?"

"Beautiful fairy!" replied Don Sylvio, "nobody can have been more agreeably undeceived than I now am; and since you can equally well discern more, as you have already divined my first thoughts, be pleased to look into my inmost soul, and condescend to read there, what I have neither the presumption nor the power to name."

Instead of making a reply to this respectful declaration of love, Donna Felicia thought proper to give him the history of the little white cat, and entertain him with its extraordinary good qualities. This subject, trite and common as it might seem in itself, became very important, especially to so complaisant a hearer as Don Sylvio, when treated by the pretty mouth of Donna Felicia, who diffused an inexpressible charm over all she said or did. Don Sylvio learned but too much; every look, every word she said, the least motion of her's, served only to increase that ecstasy of soul, in which he seemed, as it were, annihilated. His imagination, unable to conceive anything more perfect than the object he saw before him, was deprived of all its former powers, and served but to render the triumph of his sensibility more absolute. All those beautiful phantoms with which his fancy had been filled presently disappeared, as the light vapours of a spring



morning disappear before the splendours of the dawning day. He remembered his past state only as a mere dream, or, to speak more accurately, he as much forgot all that he had loved or thought of, or hoped or feared before, as if he had been drinking the largest draughts of the Lethean flood—and this oblivion lasted all the while he beheld Donna Felicia before him.

A situation like this might be agreeable enough to Don Sylvio, but it is not quite so easy to answer for Donna Felicia's sensations. After having therefore exhausted all that could be said on the subject of her cats, the conversation might possibly have become languid, had not the parrots, who love prattling and were then in the right humour, dropped in from time to time, and furnished their part in the dialogue.

CHAPTER VI

AN UNTHOUGHT-OF INTERVIEW

DONNA FELICIA expressed some uneasiness at her brother's absence, who, she observed, had given her room to hope he would bring a select company home with him. Just as she was speaking, the inner door of the saloon flew open, and Don Eugenio de Lirias, the beautiful Jacintha, and Don Gabriel, the friend of Don Eugenio, appeared before our hero, who beheld in this unknown the person whose life he had saved, or at least his mistress's, and whom he found to be the brother of his adorable fairy.

It was undoubtedly an agreeable surprise to both, but the astonishment of the brother and the sister was not inferior to that surprise. However, this was not a time to show the latter emotion: accordingly, after having presented the fair Jacintha to his sister, and recommended her to her care, Don Eugenio contented himself with assuring our hero of his joy in finding him again so unexpectedly at his own house, after that sudden departure from the inn, which seemed to him a little unaccountable. "Perhaps," said he to Donna Felicia, "you don't know how much we are indebted to Don Sylvio; you shall soon be circumstantially acquainted with a story, my dear sister, that ought not to be kept as a mystery from you any longer. All I can tell you at present is, that in the person of this amiable stranger, you see the gentleman, who at the generous hazard of his own life, has saved that of your brother,

and preserved to you the blessings of so dear a relation."

"Sir," replied our hero, "you exaggerate the merit of an assistance, which your own and your friend's valour rendered superfluous, and which is solely owing to the sentiments with which the first sight of you inspired me. If I had known then, what this fortunate hour has taught me, I would have sacrificed the last drop of my blood to preserve a life so precious."

Don Eugenio would certainly have been struck with this compliment, though a little hyperbolical in its way, had not the attention with which he strove to observe the impressions that the beautiful Jacintha made upon his sister, prevented his attending to anything else.

Donna Felicia had been greatly embarrassed how to conceal, or to render agreeable to her brother, the inclination she had for our hero, as well as the plan she had been laying in her mind for the last half-hour, and which she had projected with a promptitude peculiar only to the effects of love. It will not therefore be wondered at, that she could hardly contain herself for joy on hearing how deeply Don Eugenio thought himself obliged to Don Sylvio. This happy circumstance not only justified the extraordinary respect which she entertained for the person who had saved the life of a brother she so tenderly loved, but it also induced her to hope it might lead her to a clearer discovery of that secret history, in which, laying other circumstances into the scale, she could easily suppose Donna Jacintha would appear to be none of the least important characters.

She was therefore in great hopes of seeing her lover approved by a brother, who, as the case now stood, had so much need of her concurrence and approbation. This idea made her redouble her civilities to the young Jacintha, and possibly she might also feel herself naturally inclined to love the

engaging object, on whom Don Eugenio doted to such distraction, that though he used every imaginable appearance of reserve, he could not conceal it from his sister. Placing therefore all his sister's caresses of Donna Jacintha to the account of merit in the latter, his joy was so great as to make him heartily wish for a proper moment to pour forth his enraptured soul into the bosom of so dear a friend.

Perhaps there never was an instance when so much sympathy, and such a variety of tender and latent emotions ran through a whole company, (and most of them hardly known to each other), as in this before us. Persons so amiable as those here assembled together, cannot, in the course of nature, be indifferent to each other: but that secret relation which subsisted between them, though not yet developed, rendered the subject infinitely more interesting to them; and love and nature, which here acted as it were under cover, produced such a cordiality, such a harmony between these persons in a few minutes, as it might have required as many weeks to bring forth, upon any other footing.

Don Gabriel was the only one, who, without being particularly interested, shared in the general satisfaction. The tranquillity of his own heart allowed him to make observations upon the other parties with the penetration of a sage, and the philanthropy of a sincere friend: and though part of what he fancied he saw seemed an enigma to him, he could sufficiently discern that something curiously mysterious was soon to be unravelled.

And now came in two little negroes superbly dressed, who presented the company with refreshments, while Don Gabriel complaisantly used his best endeavours, by the vivacity of his discourse, to prevent the conversation from degenerating, every now and then, into a double, silent *tête-à-tête*.

Notwithstanding a certain whimsical turn which Don Sylvio gave to all he said or did, Don Eugenio

felt a growing friendship rise upon him every moment; and, sensible of the great obligations he owed our hero, he thought he could do no less than invite him to give him the honour of staying some time at Lirias, in order to cultivate an acquaintance which had so extraordinarily begun, and thus form it into that perfect friendship, of which he hoped to render himself not unworthy.

Don Sylvio accepted this obliging invitation with great pleasure, and without using more ceremony than princes in fairy tales commonly do, when apartments are offered them in an enchanted castle.

Soon after Donna Felicia retired with the fair Jacintha; while her brother conducted Don Sylvio to a superb room, which he begged him to consider as his own during his stay at Lirias; and then, leaving him till supper-time, waited impatiently the moment of Laura's coming to acquaint him that his sister was alone in her dressing-room.

CHAPTER VII

RECIPROCAL COMPLAISANCE

IT was long since remarked, that the saying of Terence, *Tu si hic esses, aliter sentias*,* if properly attended to, would be an infallible means to obviate all those contradictions, altercations, and dissensions, which commonly spring from the variety of men's opinions, the diversity of their passions, and that continual clashing which results between them.

To a man who should be a simple spectator of other men's follies—if it be possible for such a being to exist—nothing can be conceived more laughable than to see a whole society of moral egotists, where every one was mutually disputing for his own personality, and apparently assuming to himself no less, than for every body else, at all times, and in all circumstances, to think, feel, judge. believe, love, hate, act, and so on, just like himself: which, in other words, could only be saying, that such persons are not substantive beings, but mere simple accidents and contingents of himself.

Indeed, of all such egotists, there is none so impudent as to require this in plain terms; and yet, by pronouncing all the opinions, judgments, and inclinations of other men, foolish, erroneous, and extravagant, the moment they in any respect contradict our own, what do we else, but give it as it were under our hands, that they are fools for having eyes, brains, and heads as well as we?

* *i. e.*, "Were you in my place, you would be of another mind."

"Pray, sir, why does that please you?"

"I can give you no other reason for it, but that it does please me."

"But I cannot conceive what you see in it, that can please you to such a degree? *I*, for my part——"

"Very well, sir, this proves nothing more than the bare possibility that something may please me, which displeases you?"

"I won't positively say that this absolutely displeases me; but then neither can I say that I find it so excellent, or so extraordinary as you do."

"But granting now that it really seemed so to me?"

"Then you'd be wrong."

"And why so, sir?"

"Because the thing is not so."

"And why should it not be so?"

"That's an odd question, begging your pardon. Have not I as good eyes as you? Is not my taste as accurate as yours? Cannot I judge as competently of the value of a thing as you? If this was so excellent as you imagine it, I must necessarily find it so as well as yourself."

"I can say all this with the same right as you. If the eye, the understanding, or the imagination in this case are to decide, why must I trust to your eyes, to your understanding, and to your imagination, rather than my own? I should be glad to know that?"

"I'll tell you in one word. I consider the thing just as it is, and you, on the contrary, are blinded by passion."

"Very well, sir; 'tis just what I expected. If sometimes passion blinds, (and it does so only when it exceeds the bounds, which can hardly last long), yet, on the other hand, it commonly makes people see clearer. How can you expect that a fugitive, fortuitous, negligent look, cast upon an object with

indifference, should be able to discover in that object so much, or to remark the degrees of its true value so justly, as passion does; which, considering it with the minutest attention, examines it on all sides, and observes it in every point of view?"

"But the imagination, which insensibly intrudes into all one's observations——"

"Pray, sir, be kind enough to consider, none but fools or madmen take their imaginations for real sentiments; why are you much fonder of persisting to prove a supposition, which would render the soundness of my brain dubious, than of owning that there may be a something, which I may know better than yourself, or which, for good reasons, may appear very differently to me, than to you?"

"Pray, gentlemen, don't be warm," cries a third person, who had overheard this dispute between I and thou: "you might go on at this rate for a whole day together without changing each other's opinion; and why so? The reason is very plain—because you are both of you in the right. *Tu si hic esses*, said Terence: you judge like a lover, and as such you are right; and you, sir, judge like an indifferent man, and as such you are right too."

"But, Mr. Umpire, the question here is, whether he can be in the right to love anything, which in fact——"

"Is indifferent to you, you mean to say?"

"No, sir—but which does not merit that degree of love, which he——"

"Why there now, that's the very question, sir, which cannot be decided. At this rate we always run round and round in the same circle, and may do so eternally without ever seeing an end. Your dispute is of such a nature as can only terminate in the amiable. Do but freely confess to each other, that *I* is well authorised not to be *thou*; then each of you put himself in the other's place; and I'd lose my head if you did not think as he does,

provided you were he, or found yourself in his situation: and so the quarrel is ended."

There is not a more vexatious situation in this world, as Aristotle probably may have remarked before us, than that of a lover, who is to give an account of his inclinations to a third person, especially if that third person is at all insensible. Donna Felicia and her brother now found themselves in this critical situation, and had it not been for the present disposition of affairs, each of them might probably have met with many difficulties to surmount, previously to the obtaining each other's approbation. Donna Felicia and Don Eugenio might mutually and in vain have recriminated upon the *Tu si hic esses*; never could they have made half the way they actually did, but that they found themselves in each other's situation. Such is the difference of that effect which a superficial abstraction, or a real sentiment has upon us! Indeed, had they been inclined to baffle and perplex each other, or had they been of that unblushing sort of people, who are determined to have the sole right of wearing the fool's cap, there was matter enough before them for mutual aggravation to work upon. But now both of them having a good share of reason, and a fund of complaisance, the only question was how to remove that obstacle which the indifference of one party might naturally throw in the other's way. Put the case that Donna Felicia had been in no want of her brother's indulgence in her own favour, what objections might she not have raised against his love for a girl without name, fortune, or even shining qualities?—for a person, who, possibly, might have reason to blush at her own birth, and with whom his acquaintance commenced upon a stage?—"I grant all this," Don Eugenio might have replied, "all these objections, and all that you, or my friends, or the world could say, my own reason has told me a thousand times over; and, however



foolish I may appear to you, yet am I not so far infatuated, as not to see clearly that you and my reason have the advantage. But what can all this avail against the dictates of my heart? against an irresistible attraction, which I neither can nor desire to subdue. Half of the circumstances already urged might have been more than sufficient to damp an ordinary passion: but the force of sympathy, my dear sister!—In short, it must be experienced, before any one can know how far it is impossible to resist it even from the first moment of the attack."

Donna Felicia might have thought this a very weak argument, had she not herself known that same sympathy, by which Don Eugenio sought to justify his folly, his weakness, or whatever those sage ones who are got above all such extravagances shall please to call it; if she had not known it, I say, by her own experience. And, indeed, how could she help thinking it absurd, that a sentiment so delusive, uncertain, and inexplicable—that this, I know not what, which perhaps is but a mere phantom of the imagination, should be thought sufficient to get the better of the voice of reason, of prudence, and of honour. But, luckily for their twofold passion, they were now both of them, if not in the same, at least in a very similiar situation. What Donna Felicia felt for Don Sylvio, perfectly well explained to her what Don Eugenio called his sympathy for the fair Jacintha; and Don Eugenio could not be so unjust as to require his sister to stifle an inclination which himself had pronounced irresistible. Accordingly, they did each other the favour of starting such objections as their own reason could readily furnish them with, to combat the feelings of their hearts; and then they mutually endeavoured, by means as ready and more agreeable, to remove the obstacles which opposed their warmest wishes. The complacency with which Donna Felicia entertained her brother's passion, merited all

imaginable gratitude on his part; and as nothing, in fact, but the extravagant turn of our hero's fancy could render him unworthy of Donna Felicia's love, everything now seemed to depend upon the methods to be used for restoring his brain to its natural seat. The barber's hints were laid down as their foundation, and Don Eugenio prudently judged that no great pains would be requisite to set right a young man, whose folly consisted merely in a species of fanaticism, which had taken so singular a turn from accidental causes. "I can clearly perceive," said he to his sister, "that you are not indifferent to him. Indeed you have a rival; but as that is only a butterfly, still unchanged into an imaginary princess, she will not long dispute the victory with you. In the mean time, let us show his folly so much indulgence as may be necessary to gain his confidence, and nature and love will then do the rest. This fanaticism will by degrees give place to sentiment; and when once the latter has got the ascendant, nothing will be easier than to remove from his mind those prejudices and wrong notions, which will no longer meet with any authority in his heart to countenance or support them."

To see her own ideas thus justified by her brother, highly delighted Donna Felicia. She did not fail to testify her gratitude for his kindness, by saying everything obliging and civil of his dear Jacintha that his heart could wish. She even assured him that she found something in her person and mode of thinking too noble, not to be persuaded that the mystery of her birth would one day unfold itself greatly to her advantage; while Don Eugenio, with whom this idea was very familiar, had always found it too favourable to the true feelings of his heart, to wish his understanding so bad an employment as that of raising objections to what he heard.

After having therefore settled their minds respecting the measures to be taken for obtaining

their end, which was to cure Don Sylvio of his follies; they judged it proper to communicate part of the secret to the fair Jacintha and Don Gabriel. And now, matters being so well adjusted, they parted as highly satisfied as they had ever been in their lives, and retired to the hall to join their guests till supper time.



CHAPTER VIII

A COMBAT BETWEEN LOVE FOR THE PICTURE, AND LOVE FOR THE ORIGINAL

THE brilliant splendour of the hall they were in, the number of wax candles that enlightened it, the magnificence of the plate, the delicacy of the dishes. and a variety of the most exquisite wines; all this, even in other circumstances, would not at all have surprised our hero, though it was the first time in his life he had ever seen so sumptuous an appearance, or known anything of it more than in idea. It satisfied him, to imagine himself really present in some fairy palace. But had he been only in a cottage, it would have been pretty easy to persuade him that he was in the palace of the fairy Luminosa; so entirely had Donna Felicia engrossed his thoughts and attention.

The beautiful Felicia could not be the last to perceive the impression she had made upon him; and, imagining she could not make herself too sure of her conquest, she soon determined to employ all her charms to keep his heart awake. An agreeable symphony which was heard during the repast, though there was no seeing whence it came, (and of which, therefore, Don Sylvio presently gave the whole merit to the sylphs, those usual servitors in fairy courts), furnished Donna Felicia with an opportunity of displaying her musical talents, which she did as soon as supper was ended. Young Jacintha thought herself excelled, nor had a single wish to dispute with Donna Felicia the high and

extravagant applause which the enchanted Don Sylvio poured largely upon her. Don Eugenio, however, was too jealous of his young friend's favourite accomplishments to leave his sister in the quiet possession of such great and universal praise; and therefore every now and then pressed her to enter the lists with the fair Felicia, which could not fail to give a general pleasure to the whole company. The two ladies, contrary to the usual mode with persons of their sex, seemed so mutually and so cordially to give each other the preference, that it was rather difficult to doubt the sincerity of their obliging efforts. Don Gabriel fancied it must have been easier for Paris to adjudge the golden apple to one of the three goddesses on Mount Ida, than to say which of these two lovely Muses excelled the other, whether in beauty of voice or elegance of song, in the dexterity of finger, or in the skill of applying all those enchanting powers of harmony which they had so much at their command. The lovers themselves, fully determined as the point was in every other view, confessed, however, that if it was possible for one of them to be surpassed, Donna Felicia could be so only by Jacintha, and the beauteous Jacintha only by Felicia.

Our little society were so far from being tired of this pastime, and the ladies carried their complaisance in this respect to such a degree, that day-dawn at length broke in, to inform them that it was high time for repose.

Excepting Don Gabriel—who at the age of forty, was now elevated above that stormy region of the passions, to the calm and serene summit of an almost stoical tranquillity of soul—excepting him, it is hard to say whether any of the rest of the company had the least wish or inclination for sleeping. This we certainly know, that Don Sylvio never found himself in a situation so little favourable to that indulgence. Nay, in his present ecstasy, he did not



even take notice, that instead of his honest Pedrillo, whom he saw nothing of, and whose absence he had not once perceived, there were two young pages waiting in his antechamber, who solicited the honour to undress him, and in fact they did so before he thought of preventing it. Having then first dismissed these pages, whom, according to his laudable custom, he had elevated to the rank of sylphs, he put on his clothes again; threw himself into an arm-chair with his face turned toward the rising sun, and presently fell into a deep reverie, with that pleasure of which few people are capable of enjoying an idea, respecting the charming object ever present to his enchanted mind. Thus he continued for a considerable time, and at length, arousing from his cogitations, and collecting his scattered wits about him, he began to ask himself what he was to think of all that had happened to him in this palace. He thought he could perfectly remember that it was neither a dream nor an apparition, like what he had met with before. But to say what the mistress of this palace could be—whether she was a fairy, a mortal, or a goddess, or even perhaps his princess, as the resemblance she bore to his lost portrait seemed to persuade him—this was a point he could by no means settle within himself. Indeed the latter supposition was so suited to his wishes, that he strove for a long time to find it probable; but, after a maturer inquiry, this hypothesis appeared so full of difficulties, that he even gave it up. "Possibly," said he, "she may be a relation of my princess; or possibly she is a person born under the same constellation, or under the influence of the same stars. Or perhaps she may have assumed this resemblance for other private reasons; or perhaps all this is but a soft error of my heart, seduced by some similar feature, that makes it fancy it sees everywhere, what everywhere it desires to see." After various reflections of this



kind, the last seemed to him the most likely, as it seemed best to coincide with his sworn fidelity to his mistress. In this manner then he persisted to admire his princess in the person of Donna Felicia; concluding very judiciously how charming, how enchanting, supernatural, divine, and if possible, more than divine, must his princess's perfections be, when a bare resemblance only could render the fairy so delectable in his eyes!

In order to give more force to this argument, his imagination exerted its utmost efforts to represent the pretended princess as still more charming, more lovely, and more complete than Donna Felicia; but, whether his imagination was incapable of producing anything more perfect than nature, or whether love in this case played him one of its usual tricks; certain it is, that the image of the beautiful Felicia constantly appeared, instead of the princess's; and all his endeavours to represent her to himself under any other form or features, were vain and fruitless.

This circumstance extremely embarrassed him. Without distrusting his own heart, he began shrewdly to suspect that enchantment which Donna Felicia seemed to exercise over it. Many an odd idea crowded into his brain, which he rejected or retained by turns, as he thought them plausible or otherwise; and the result of his deliberations was, that his best plan would be to get away from this dangerous mansion as soon as possible, or at least, as soon as ever he found reason to suppose that his suspicions were well grounded.

CHAPTER IX

WHAT A DANGEROUS SORT OF MEN ARE PHILOSOPHERS!

WHILE Don Sylvio was pursuing these abstract reflections, the sun arose. To meditate more coolly therefore, he went into the garden; and Heaven knows whither his thoughts might at length have carried him, had not Don Gabriel, who commonly amused himself there in a morning with a book in his hand, met him in one of the alleys which formed the labyrinth before-mentioned.

The book which Don Gabriel held, as luck would have it, was a volume of natural philosophy. This led them insensibly into a discourse upon nature, in which Don Sylvio maintained his cabalistical notions and principles with so much sagacity and eloquence that Don Gabriel could no less help wondering at the beauty of his genius, and the general falseness of his ideas.

None but such a philosopher as Don Gabriel could have helped utterly despairing to subdue so rooted a fanaticism. Out of complaisance, however, to our hero's prepossessions, he rationally hoped that, without directly encountering his principles, he might lead Don Sylvio insensibly on to such a length, as should in the end incline him to doubt the truth of his favourite system.

Our readers of both sexes, (for notwithstanding Mr Rousseau's strict prohibition, we shall not overlook them)—amongst whom there may not probably be one that needs to be cured of the errors of a

Zoroaster, a Plotinus, a Paracelsus, the Cabalists, and Rosicrusians—might, perhaps, think themselves not much obliged to us, were we to communicate to them this profoundly metaphysical conversation, which lasted from six in the morning till the company were assembled to breakfast in a little saloon down the garden. We shall content ourselves with informing them that Don Gabriel—in spite of all that imaginable respect which he pretended to have for all those sages who make nature, both in the whole, and in every part of it, move by the agency of spirits—urged such strong objections against this marvellous species of natural philosophy, that Don Sylvio, if not fully convinced, was at least considerably staggered in sentiment; and, notwithstanding Don Gabriel's great precaution not to offend the fairies, began to fear for all his fairy tales, and even for his own adventures; supposing that the principles of Don Gabriel, which however, were advanced only as mere hypotheses, should be found true *in facto*.

'Tis certain Don Sylvio endeavoured to extricate himself by that usual argument of fanatics, when sound reasons reduce them to extremities, viz., that he appealed to his own experience; concluding, that principles contradictory to his sense must absolutely be false. But there was an inexpressible something in his head, that hindered him from being so composed as we usually are, when a truth is proved to us by a geometrical demonstration; not to say that he felt a secret relish for this kind of speculation. 'Twas agreed therefore, and he with pleasure consented to it, that the conversation should be resumed some other day when they had more leisure. Accordingly Don Eugenio's library was fixed upon as their rendezvous for that purpose.

CHAPTER X

CONCERNING THE FORCE OF RESOLUTIONS MADE AGAINST LOVE

AMONGST other impressions, Don Sylvio had determined with a manly force to resist those, which the resemblance between Donna Felicia and his princess, whereof he greatly wished to persuade himself, had made upon his heart. This heroical resolution, instantly on his entering the saloon with Don Gabriel, gave him a more stiff and borrowed air than any intermediate being between a boy and a young man that had just left college, and found himself for the first time in good company, ever yet put on. Donna Felicia perceived it, but took no notice; guessing at the cause with that extraordinary sagacity which love commonly imparts to his votaries, and not without reason, indulging a hope that her presence would soon decide this struggle betwixt the heart and the imagination.

The moralists have often told us, and will often tell us again, that there is but one certain remedy against love. This, say they, is to fly as fast as possible, the moment you feel its infection seize you. This remedy is undoubtedly excellent; and yet we cannot help regretting that these wise teachers have not carried their complaisance so far as to point out to us the method in which this remedy is to be applied to the disease. For, as some pretend, 'tis observable that a lover is naturally as incapable of flying from the object that excited his passion, as if he were tied hand and foot, or had entirely lost



the use of all his limbs. Nay, some have even insisted, after a variety of experiments made upon the subject, that in such circumstances, it is not possible for us to wish for the power of flight, though it were otherwise attainable.

'Tis true, Don Sylvio had taken a sort of resolution to fly as soon as he should find it necessary; but, as we have seen, this resolution was only conditional, and love had always the right of deciding whether it was necessary to fly or no; and what is more, this resolution was taken when the beautiful Felicia was not present.

The presence of the beloved object diffuses around it a sort of magical force, or rather, (to avail ourselves of a term equally unintelligible, but more worthy of our philosophic age) a sort of magnetical effluence. The lover no sooner comes within this magnetical vortex, than he feels himself whirled on by an irresistible impulse, causing the brain to turn round and round in a kind of spiral line, so briskly, that at length—we leave it to our readers' sagacity to run the allegory as far as he pleases, or as far as it can go, and shall only offer this remark, that the attractive virtue of a person one loves hath this peculiar quality—without reckoning those which it possesses in common with natural and artificial magnets—namely, to efface instantaneously, in the soul of the attracted body, every thought, imagination, remembrance or resolution, that could possibly weaken its effect.

Don Sylvio will soon serve as a proof of this physical observation. He had proposed to himself not to look at, or at all regard Donna Felicia; and yet he could not for the soul of him help, at least obliquely, casting a glance that way. Soon after he ventured to look full at her, but with so timid an air, as if he feared she had basilisk's eyes. This trial succeeded so well that he became bolder; and at length he tried so long, as to be incapable of

taking, or wishing to take off his eyes from this enchanting object. In short, the magnetical virtue above-mentioned wrought so effectually, that he gave himself up as perfectly, as composedly, and with as much ecstasy, to the pleasure of beholding his fair goddess, as if neither a Radiante, nor a blue butterfly, nor an enchanted princess, had ever existed in the microcosm of his brain.

With respect to her own heart, the amiable Felicia found herself pretty nearly in the same situation. Don Sylvio had at least as magnetical an influence over her, as she had exercised upon him; nay, if we will believe Albertus Magnus, and some other investigators of nature (not to mention good old blind Tiresias, who, as having been sometime man, sometime woman, could speak experimentally), if, I say, we may credit these sages, the attraction which she felt must have been by much the most powerful, however able she might be to weaken its effect, as need and circumstances required, by means of that property called *vis inertiæ*, wherewith nature or education have endued the sex. This reciprocal attraction naturally accelerated that wonderful concentration, which is the usual consequence of it; and while both of them, unconscious and unawares, stood mutually attracting and attracted, they found their souls already in perfect contact at all points, so perfect, that to think of disuniting the one from the other, must have been just as easy as to separate two dewdrops blended together in the bosom of a new-blown rose.

The conversation, in a company so sympathising as this, could not long remain indifferent. Their discourse turned insensibly upon that singular chance which had brought our hero acquainted with Don Eugenio, and the part which the fair Jacintha bore in that adventure, excited in those who were not yet fully informed of her history, a curiosity so much the more reasonable, as the young lady's

amiable qualities had already prepossessed all their hearts in her favour; for Don Sylvio himself, insensible as his passion for the beautiful Felicia must have rendered him to every other, felt, in spite of him, a kind of inclination towards her; an inclination which mightily puzzled him how to explain to himself, and which, without having any of its ardent inclinations and glowing desires, seemed to have all the tenderness of love.

The fair Jacintha had no reason to make a mystery of her story to any one of the company present; on the contrary, she had many things of importance to reveal. Don Eugenio's passion—what he had already done for her—his intentions towards her, and perhaps too the most considerable events of her life, were in a great measure known before; and however great the respect which Donna Felicia showed her, there might possibly, she feared, be some prejudices taken against her which she the rather wished to remove, as she had formed a resolution, (as firm a one as a person in love can be supposed to form), of putting an end to her acquaintance with Don Eugenio. She made no difficulty therefore of gratifying her lover's request, seconded by that of Don Sylvio and the beautiful Felicia; and accordingly began to relate her adventures, which our hero listened to with great avidity, as not doubting but the fairies would be found to have a pretty considerable share in them.

CHAPTER XI

HISTORY OF THE FAIR JACINTHA

"If it be true, as I am strongly inclined to think," said Jacintha, beginning her narration, "that a woman is so much the more to be esteemed, as she excites less talk about her: if this is true, I am very unfortunate to be reduced to give a relation of my adventures, at an age when most persons of our sex only begin, with great timidity, to quit their tender mother's wing; and indeed, if the fault were my own, this consideration would render me very uneasy to myself.

"All I can tell you of my origin is, that I know nothing at all about it. I remember indeed, but very confusedly, the time that I fell into the hands of an old gipsy woman by whom I was brought up: and I have some transient idea of having been before that time in a large house, where there were several women, and a little brother whom I tenderly loved. But this slight remembrance is so weak, and so much effaced from my mind, that I could not positively assure you that the fact is really so.

"The gipsy, who passed herself for my grandmother, though my heart constantly disavowed the relation, bestowed a good deal of pains to give me an education suitable to her views respecting me. I was hardly seven years old, when the gracefulness with which I danced to the sound of the tabor, the ready answers I gave, and a thousand little turns of address which I was mistress of, so gained me, wherever we went, the affection of the people, that

it drew upon us showers of reals and maravedis. This success animated the old woman to neglect nothing which might help to display the talents which she fancied I possessed. At the age of twelve I played upon the guitar and theorbo; I sang a vast number of romances and little songs; I could tell fortunes, and was as clever a chiromancer* as any gipsy whatever.

"The attention I paid to everything I saw and heard, though it might not have been credited from my giddy appearance, led me to remark one festival day, while we were at Toledo, that among the multitude of spectators brought together by the dancing and ballads, in which I and some other young girls were obliged to figure for the benefit of our old governess, there were two men of a grave appearance, who seemed to look at me with compassion. 'What a pity,' cried one, 'that she is a gipsy! Ah, how soon will that beauty, now unknown to herself, become the prey to seduction!' —'Nay, trust me,' said the other, 'she seems much more likely to seduce others than to be seduced herself, if we may credit her looks.'—'So much the worse for her,' replied the former: 'that virtue, which in every other condition is a merit, is such a defect in this, as can only render her so much the more unhappy.'—This discourse, which I caught up without their perceiving it, made a very strong impression upon me, and the less I could reach its meaning, the more earnestly did I strive and wish to find it out.

"The old gipsy, who really thought of nothing but how to render me seducing, had given herself very little trouble to make me understand what virtue was; and indeed, how should she do it, who neither knew the sensation herself, nor had a single idea concerning it? I was not, however, utterly

* One who pretends to read the destiny of people by inspecting the lines in their hands.

destitute of principles. A certain instinct, which gradually unfolded itself in my mind from the attention I bestowed upon the actions of our little society, joined to the emotions of my own heart, told me that one thing was good, and that another was not so, though I was still incapable of giving any other reason for it, than my own opinion. The romances and fairy tales, of which I knew a prodigious quantity by heart, were another source from whence I derived to myself a species of morality; which, though perhaps it was by no means exact, was at least far better than to have none at all. This instinct, these confused ideas which I had of moral beauties, and the discourse of the two Toledans, which I could not forget, at length inspired me with a sensible abhorrence of my condition, and of the kind of life we led, innocent as it was in some respects. 'Surely,' thought I to myself, 'I must be in a miserable situation indeed, when strangers think me so worthy of their pity; and is it not so in fact? obliged as I am to exhibit myself everywhere as a show, and all for a mean and contemptible reward; to suffer the leer of every thoughtless, silly spectator, and to be made a laughing-stock to people totally unknown to me.' This idea made me by degrees so despicable to myself, that I soon lost all taste for those trifling diversions which hitherto had taken up a chief part of my life.

"I was in such a situation of mind as this, when one day the old woman conducted us to a large handsome house, where she hoped to pick up a few ducats by means of the talents of her pretended daughters, (for there were five or six of us, the oldest scarce fourteen years of age). The lady of the house was a widow of thirty, whose chief employment consisted in well educating her only daughter, a very genteel young creature, nearly about my own age. This lady seemed touched with my innocence,

and that secret chargin which appeared in my countenance. She took me aside, put many questions to me, and seemed satisfied with my replies. At length she asked me whether I should not like to live with her. I was so enchanted with her noble air, and her great affability, that she might read my answer in my face, before I could find words to express the joy I felt at her proposal. She repeated her offer to the old gipsy, and forgot nothing that she thought necessary to assure her, that she would take good care of me. The old woman, however, who had other designs upon me, was inexorable; and at length declared, I was too useful to her, to think of giving me up without being amply recompensed for the loss of me. Unfortunately for me, this generous lady who had so captivated my heart, did not think herself rich enough to gratify the old Beldam's exorbitant demands; who no sooner perceived that, than she made haste to quit the house. My tears so powerfully affected the good lady, that she could hardly persuade herself not to employ some force to detain me: but the old woman so strenuously urged her maternal claims upon me, that I could not stand the contest with her, though my heart murmured at the compliance. In short, we were forced asunder, and the fear of being pursued made the old creature so circumspect, that she led us back all the way through forests, lanes and byroads, till at length we came to Seville. I was inconsolable, and the old woman found it necessary to give scope to my grief before she undertook to make me consider my lot in a more smiling point of view. I was too young and too much inclined to gaiety, to let the sadness I had hitherto indulged be of any long duration. Our arrival at Seville made a great change in our mode of living. The old woman hired a very spacious house, gave me a room to myself, and grew doubly complaisant and civil to me; she procured me

masters to perfect me in music, and every day made me some present of ribands and other pretty gewgaws.

"At length, one day when she saw me more cheerful than ordinary, she entered into a long conversation with me, accompanied with such caresses and flattering speeches as she thought might best open the way to my heart. Then she told me, that now the time drew nigh in which she hoped to reap the fruit of all those cares she had bestowed upon me. She praised my charms very highly, assuring me that the felicity of my life would entirely depend upon the use I should learn to make of them. 'Thou see'st by my example, my dear child,' said she, 'that old age creeps upon us every day. Our harvest time is in youth's May morning, and if we let that slip, the loss is irreparable. I cannot leave thee riches; thy figure and talents are all thy fortune: but never fear, if thou dost but manage them well, 'twill produce thee a shower of gold.' After this flattering preamble she began to talk of love; and here she thought herself sure of making me believe every thing she wished, on account of my inexperience. She exhausted her own imagination to warm and elevate mine; but the cool indifference with which I heard her, declared that the picture she took such pains to exhibit had not made the least impression upon me. She imagined, probably, that this coolness proceeded rather from that total ignorance of gallantry in which I lived, than from an absolute insensibility; and might therefore suppose that a handsome young instructor would be more capable than her, of giving me a taste for that new art in which she wished me to be initiated. Accordingly, soon after this she brought a young gentleman of Seville into my chamber, who, she told me, was very desirous of the pleasure of my acquaintance; and then, under a pretence of I know not what business, left us



together alone. The young gentleman introduced the conversation with a few compliments picked up, as it should seem, from some old books of knight errantry, and which, in all probability, he had got by rote. These were followed by a very sprightly declaration of love; and apprehending, perhaps, that I had not sufficiently understood it, he concluded with an attempt to take liberties with me. I was a good deal alarmed, and repulsed him not in the politest manner. But a moment's reflection, or rather the instinct before-mentioned, and which, at least to me, supplied the want of reflection—for I would not be thought to judge of all our sex by the observations I have made upon my own person—this presently suggested to me that indignation and rigorous measures would avail me nothing here. I therefore addressed him with an affected gaiety: 'Pray, sir, is this your usual way? I will suppose you may like me; it may be so; but you must own, however, there is a previous question still unresolved, and that is, whether or no I like you; nay more, whether I could like you if I would, for that does not always depend upon our will. You fall in love, it seems, very easily: that's your way. I proceed a little more slowly; that's mine. My favours are inseparable from my heart, and that is not so easy to gain as perhaps you may imagine: my heart, begging your pardon, does not like to yield immediately at the first summons. But if you love me so much as you would wish me to believe, a little complacency, and the waiting calmly for what my capricious heart shall at length determine, will not give you a great deal of trouble. Come, sir,' continued I, 'to relieve your pain I will sing you a romance, which you will own to be the best you ever heard in your life.' So saying, without giving him time to reply, I flew to my theorbo, gently flourished with my voice while I tuned the instrument, and then sung him one of those old ballads

above a hundred and fifty couplets long, whose melody was so soporiferous, that the vivacity of a Frenchman could hardly have been sufficient to cope with it. My young gentleman sat very quiet, eyed me with a sort of silly admiration, and every now and then, with a gape, cried out, 'Ah, how sweet, how pathetic is that! Oh, incomparably fine!' At length he grew heartily tired, and perceiving that the romance was not likely to have an end, took up his hat, made me a very low bow, and disappeared, after giving me the flattering hope of seeing him soon again.

"Perhaps, you will say, that on this occasion I showed too much of a disposition to coquetry; but my only purpose is to relate the truth, whether advantageous to me or otherwise; and so it was, and I cannot help it.

"Soon after this the old woman came to see for me, and I thought I could discern from her discourse, that the young gentleman was gone away very little pleased with me. She was equally, or less so than he, when I told her how I had managed to moderate his little vivacities. However, she commended me for so doing, hoping to derive great advantages from the dispositions which she fancied she saw in me. 'There's no absolute necessity,' said she, 'that we should love every one that loves us; on the contrary, there is nothing in the world which a young person who wishes to make her own fortune, ought more carefully to avoid, than a serious passion. Complaisance, my child, that's all that can be wished for. In the meantime, you do well to set a proper value upon the least favours you grant: a maid is worth only just so much as she knows how to rate herself at. Now, now is thy time, my child, we are not fifteen every day.'—And thus the old creature ran on for a long while.

"At length, 'From your discourse,' said I, interrupting her, 'I judge it is your intention to bring this

young man here again.'—'Why not?' replied the old woman; 'ay, and twenty more too, who shall please thee far better perhaps than he. We'll see everybody, and refuse nobody; we'll choose one, and in the meantime amuse the rest till it comes to their turn.' Instead of answering her, I burst into a flood of tears, and then told her, I had not the least inclination for such a kind of life, bitterly reproaching her for not having left me with the good lady who would have been so glad to take me under her protection. 'If I am chargeable to you——' said I—'Oh, that thou shalt never be,' interrupted the old woman; 'thou shalt be useful both to me and to thyself at the same time.'—'But how can that be?' cried I; 'we have now done with singing and dancing in private houses, or public places, or upon festival days; and if I may speak sincerely, I would sooner suffer death than continue rambling about the country to divert people with my gambols, and pick up money here and there as if I was a young ape; I should die with shame, and I declare to you, I would rather do anything in the world than——' 'Make thyself easy,' said the old woman, 'thou shalt never do so again. When thou wast but a child, all that was very well, but now that thou art a grown-up girl, and beginnest to unfold like a rose-bud, other employments will better suit thy condition. What is a rose worth till it be gathered?—and roses like thee have this peculiar faculty, that when they are gathered they flourish so much the better. When thou wast only a child, it became thee very well to divert people with thy little playful tricks; now it is time to think of some other kind of amusement. Thy youth, figure, and talents, will procure thee lovers, as many as thou shalt wish for.'—'But I tell you, I will not have any lovers,' replied I; 'and if I must, I will repeat it a hundred thousand times over.'—'Thou *wilt not* have any lovers!' cried the old woman, bursting into a loud

laugh, 'poor fool that thou art! Thou wilt not?—we shall soon see that. I know thee better than thou knowest thyself; we shall talk more about it in a week's time. Thou imaginest that, because the first visitor thou hast seen was indifferent to thee. But, as I said before, if thou dost not meet with a lover in less than a week, whom thou shalt be as fond of as any little puss upon earth, I renounce my profession.' So saying, she went out without looking at me, while I stood blushing for shame and indignation. I was really beside myself; I threw me into an arm-chair, then got up, cried, sighed, sobbed, lifted up my hands to heaven; and amidst that confusion of ideas, when one is hardly capable of thinking, I began to cast about for the means of ridding myself from the clutches of this vile old wretch. In these sad moments I bethought me of that amiable lady before-mentioned. 'Surely,' said I to myself, 'she would receive me, could I but find any way to secure my escape.' But, to my great vexation, I neither knew her name nor place of abode, for the old gipsy had never given me the least intimation of them. I could recollect, however, that her seat was but a few miles distant from Calatrava, and I had no doubt of being able to find it out, could I but get to that village. These considerations served to administer some little consolation, as I determined to make my escape, and put my plan in execution at the first favourable opportunity which should offer itself for that purpose."

CHAPTER XII

CONTINUATION OF THE BEAUTIFUL JACINTHA'S HISTORY

"My companions, whom I had seen but very seldom for some time past, had, as I afterwards found, shown more docility in subservience to the old woman's designs. Great pains had been hitherto taken to conceal from me everything that passed in the house: but now the old wretch fancied it was time to undraw the curtain. These poor young creatures, who saw only the agreeable aspect of their new mode of life, seemed quite enchanted with it: they could not find words sufficient to point out to me their felicity; and the eldest of them was now become expert enough to be able to laugh pretty smartly at my prudishness, as she called it. In short, I played a very silly part amongst these girls: but my confusion was considerably augmented when I saw a group of young fellows appear, who, coming in one after another to the private apartment where we were, affected an air of acquaintance and familiarity, as if they belonged to the family. My physiognomy being unknown to them, the whole train presently came about me, and seemed to give each other the signal to embarrass me, if they could, by the excessive praises they lavished upon me. The old woman, perceiving my distress, took me aside, and told me that these were persons of quality who did her the honour of sometimes spending an evening with her; assuring me at the same time, that they were very polite young gentlemen, who

had no other view than that of innocent mirth and diversion; that all they wanted was cheerful conversation, some music, a collation, and now and then a ball; that they paid like princes, and that as hers was a coffee-house, nobody in the world could find anything to object against her seeing such good company. For my own part, I could only appear satisfied with these reasons, and indeed the gentlemen conducted themselves so well till supper-time, that the fear they had put me into gave place by degrees to the natural vivacity of my temper. I did not long object against singing them songs and romances, as many as they desired; and I must own my little vanity was not quite insensible to the flattering things they were pleased to say of me. Supper, however, soon changed the scene: for no sooner had the wine got into their heads, than they began to make themselves amends for that restraint which hitherto had appeared to be not at all involuntary. The indiscreet levity of my companions seemed to invite them to the liberties which they took; the discourse, the eyes, the hands, all became more unbridled, and before it could well be perceived, the former decent and allowed gaiety was changed into a frightful excess of drunkenness and libertinism. In short, they were downright Bacchanals. 'Twould be in vain for me to attempt to give you a description of the situation I found myself in, at the sight and hearing of such horrors. My perturbation and confusion was made the object of their mad mirth. Two young sots of this noble fraternity, undertook, as they told me, to make me more tractable; and their nymphs, who certainly could not be taxed with prudery, encouraged them in it. I attempted to get away, but the two before-mentioned cut off my retreat to the door; I then ran up to the old woman and threw myself at her feet, conjuring her to protect and save me; but all she did was to deride and laugh at my distress.

'What!' said she, 'dost thou think we want to kill thee? Fie upon thee for a stupid thing! nobody shall do thee harm. These young gentlemen do thee a great deal of honour to amuse themselves with thee, and thou, truly, must play the fool, and cry and make a noise as if thou wert mad! Come, come, Don Ferdinand, comfort the poor child for me.' This language completed my despair; I started up, flew to the table like a frantic creature, and snatching up a knife, vowed to kill myself on the spot if any one dared to lay hands upon me. 'Adzounds!' cried one of the sots, 'this begins to be a tragical kind of affair. Did you ever see the like? Why, this outdoes Lucretia! for she, before she determined to make away with herself, chose at least to try whether the fact was worth the punishment.' This pretended sally was followed with a great many others, in which the gentlemen strove who should outdo the rest. At last, there arose a great dispute between them, which of the company should attempt, as they said, to tame this little dragon; when one of them made a proposition to decide it, by drawing lots for me. A treatment of such indignity so overwhelmed my spirits, that I sank down into an arm-chair, I scarcely can tell how, more dead than alive. I know not what might have ensued, or what would have become of me in the present situation, had not one of the company, for whom the others seemed to have some respect, and who had been looking at me the whole evening very attentively, all of a sudden taken up my defence. He told the others, in a tone of voice which had its effect, that I did not deserve such treatment; at the same time making signs to the old woman to lead me out of the room. Accordingly, she conducted me into a little apartment, where I threw myself upon a couch, and relieved my heart by a flood of tears. The old woman left me alone to myself for above an hour. At length, having

recovered my spirits, I again ruminated in my brain the project of my escape. Whatever had formerly appeared as insurmountable obstacles, now seemed as nothing in my esteem: all my thoughts now were only how to get out of the house, and which way to extricate myself from the difficulties surrounding me, destitute as I was of money, and having no acquaintance. 'But, however,' said I to myself, 'if I could but once make my retreat from under this hateful roof, Heaven will take care of the rest.' My impatience increased to such a degree, that I would not a moment defer the execution of my scheme, whatever ill-consequence might ensue from it. But how great was my distress when I found the door shut against me! I ran to the windows that stood over the market-place, but they were too high for me to get at them, and fortified with a strong iron grating. I then called out as loud as I was able, to make myself heard in the street: but, to complete my ill-fortune, the room was too far distant for any one to distinguish my voice: then I returned to the couch, tore my hair, and cried and lamented myself like a person mad; taxing Heaven for having given me a gipsy's birth, with a heart like mine, too noble and exalted for my mean condition; or, if I were not thus born, for having exposed me to affronts so insupportably injurious. 'Oh, surely,' I cried, 'I never could have been born for so vile a station! If my figure and complexion had not told me so, still would my soul protest that I cannot be the grandchild of this detestable old creature, into whose power I have thus fallen, God knows how. Alas! possibly I may have derived my being from noble parents, and that tender mother who brought me into the world, at this very hour, perhaps, may still be weeping the loss of a daughter, whom once it was her highest hope to render amiable and happy!'

"My heated imagination pursued for a good while



these ideas, which had more than once heretofore made my situation intolerable, and which never failed to inspire me with a sort of courage to raise myself, at least in sentiment, above my abject circumstances. I strove, far as I was able, to trace back in my mind the earliest years of my infancy, to find, if possible, some confirmation of what I wished to know, in the feeble traces of an almost obliterated memory. 'Twas all presumption indeed, and yet this presumption, vain and all uncertain as it might seem, flattered my eager desires, and served to strengthen within me the resolution I had taken, to watch as carefully over my honour, whatever my real condition might be, as if the noblest Castilian blood ran through my veins. I was totally absorbed by these reflections when the old woman again made her appearance, and with all imaginable mildness, told me I must get myself ready to follow her to another place of abode, since her own, as it seemed, so much displeased me: and then, to give me the highest idea in her power of the happiness that awaited me, she added, that every thing where I was going would depend upon me and my orders, while myself should be independent of any body. She next endeavoured to persuade me to believe, that her design in the evening had been only to make a trial of my virtue; accordingly, she failed not to applaud my conduct, assuring me, that to it I owed that happy change of situation in which I should find myself before the night was over. On hearing this, I immediately thought of that young gentleman who had taken upon him my defence. I put the question to the old woman, but could only get vague and doubtful answers from her. My desire of getting away from a house so abominable, too much lessened in my eyes the fresh dangers into which I was about to run, to suffer an uncertain fear to overbalance the horrid fate, which here, where I now was, seemed so unavoidable; for what would

all my resistance have availed me, if once she had exercised her power against me? I consented therefore to her proposal, adjusted myself as well as I could in a hurry, and putting on my veil, followed her out of the house. It was now midnight, and the moon shone out through a light cloud. After going down a few streets and narrow lanes, we came to a coach that was waiting, it seems, for us. We got into it, and to my great surprise I observed one of my companions follow, and seat herself beside us; who, as the old woman informed me, was to be my attendant till I had time to procure another. It gave me not a little pleasure, however, to find she had taken care to assign me one whom I had always the best liking to, and who, excepting a certain weakness of understanding, was a very good kind of girl. For some time we were carried from one street to another, till at last our coach stopped at a small house which had not the most striking appearance. The door opened, we went in, and were received by an elderly woman, who lighted us forward with wax candles in her hand. She was clad in a coarse grey stuff gown; she had a pair of spectacles upon her nose of an enormous size, and at her girdle there hung a rosary which descended to her feet. This dress, with a round ruddy face that peeped through a very antique kind of a cap made like a veil, and two little eyes which she rolled about with an air of singular sanctity, gave her altogether so perfectly the look of a bigoted devotee, that I almost fancied myself to be entering a convent. That idea however soon vanished, when this curious conductress led me into an apartment consisting of four rooms on a floor, which, as she told me, was to be my place of residence for the future.

"These rooms surpassed each other in magnificence. The tapestry, glasses, china, pictures, splendid ceilings and gilded ornaments on every side, were all so unexpectedly elegant, that I stood dazzled at

the sight for a few moments. The old woman, my late governess, who had followed me thus far, waited only till I had recovered myself from the first surprise, in which, to say the truth, both fear and pleasure had an equal share. 'Now,' said she, 'my dear Jacintha,' taking me aside, 'here I leave thee to thyself. Thou art a lovely girl, and thou hast taken it into thy head to be a virtuous one. 'Tis a good notion, and if thou dost but know how to make a proper use of it, Virtue will be worth a hundred times more to thee, than thy youth and beauty could have been to me.' At these words she left me, without staying for a reply, and the venerable duenna followed her, after giving me a profound curtsey and wishing me a good night. The moment I was alone I began to reflect upon so singular an adventure. I asked little Stella, whom they left with me, what all this meant, but she was full as much in the dark as myself: only this she could tell me, she recollected that the Marquis of Villa Hermosa—the same who had stood up that evening in my defence—retired with the old woman soon after I had quitted the room, and was out above an hour before he returned. All this seemed more than sufficient to confirm me in the opinion that I had been sold to this young nobleman by that infernal grey-headed old wretch. I cast myself upon a sofa, and passed the remainder of the night in a state of inexpressible uneasiness and perturbation, amidst such a confusion of ideas as utterly prevented my taking the least repose. I turned it in my thoughts how I ought to receive the marquis if he came. My imagination presented to me a number of adventures which I had met with in old romances, and my little vanity found itself flattered by the idea that, possibly, I too might become a heroine in romance. 'Undoubtedly,' said I to myself, 'the marquis is in love with me; and if he loves me, I am sure, at least, he will treat

me with suitable decorum. Perhaps he may think to gain me over by presents, or jewels, rich habits, or the allurements of a life of pleasure; but if so, he is mistaken. The very idea that Jacintha could be capable of giving herself a victim for any price, to any person whatever, is too shocking to be indulged. I have nothing to fear on that hand. But what if he is amiable? What if my own heart should insensibly seduce me, or what if it be true that love is not always in our own power? At least it is in my power to conceal it from him—and even should he at length discover it, I will not avow it to him, nor listen to his proposals, till I have discovered to whom I owe my existence. Oh ye,' I cried, 'whose blood animates my heart, whoever ye are; that heart tells me you are worthy of a daughter, whom one day you may acknowledge as such, without blushing at the event.'

"This, amidst that multitude of ideas which now crowded into my brain, was undoubtedly the best. It had its source in my heart; I found an inexpressible pleasure in pursuing it, and I could feel it gave me a certain strength of mind, which elevated me above my age and the meanness of my condition.

"The marquis on his first visit found me in this disposition, and discovered to me his views. I had not taken much notice of him the evening before; and indeed I could only look at him then with an eye of confusion, being in such an extreme flurry and uneasiness, as rendered me incapable of the least attention. Now that I examined his person at more leisure, and was more composed, I found him perfectly handsome; my heart however remained unmoved, and spoke not the least word to me in his favour. He, for his part, seemed so prepossessed with his own figure, as not to suppose it possible to be resisted. This palpable pride shocked my vanity, a vanity, undoubtedly, which the

marquis had no reason to look for in the heart of a young gipsy girl. I shall not abuse your patience by giving you a circumstantial detail of the declarations he made, or of the answers I returned him. The simplicity with which I expressed my indifference to his charms, and the haughty modesty wherewith I refused a beautiful set of diamonds, which, as he very gallantly told me, could serve only to be effaced by the lustre of my fine eyes—seemed entirely to disconcert him. I then told him there was nothing in the world by which he could oblige me more than by recommending me to the service of some lady amongst his family or friends. He knew not how to reconcile so modest a request with that haughtiness he had in other respects observed in my sentiments. So at length, after taking a good deal of useless pains to incline me to a change of mind, he left me; hoping, as he said, that the aversion with which his figure had unfortunately inspired me would not be invincible. He was mistaken, however, in his hopes, and found out after a few more visits, that I had absolutely no soul at all. I, in return, insisted upon it that he ought to restore me to liberty. 'And what wouldst thou do then, little fool?' said he. 'My lord,' I replied, 'it is impossible for me to flatter you with an hope which my heart would disavow: I am well persuaded that I shall like you no more in a week, nor in a dozen weeks, than I do now. This you may rest assured of, and hence you may learn what to expect on my part.'—'Is that all?' cried the marquis with a sneer. 'Thou art very frank, Jacintha, it must be owned; 'tis certain thou hast given me no room to complain of being long left to languish in a state of uncertainty. Another in thy place would at least have endeavoured to make me believe she loved me, whether she really did so or not.'

"'I know not what another might do,' said I, 'but I know very well that I am not in my right place

here; nor can I rightly comprehend what you would have of me, after I have thus told you that I shall never love you.' 'Hark'ye, Jacintha,' replied the marquis, ''tis but fair I should return thee one ingenuity for another. I found thee in a house where people don't usually look for prudes, and where thou couldst have had nothing to say against it, if I had treated thee as those young fellows did, from whose impertinence I have delivered thee. But I saw it would be wrong to rank thee in the same class with thy other exceedingly-civil companions. I found thee agreeable to my fancy; thy innocence prejudiced me in thy favour; in short, I found thee amiable, and I instantly resolved to deliver thee, by rescuing thee from an house where thou appearedst infinitely more out of thy sphere than where thou art now. I have purchased thee of thy mother.'—'What did you say, my lord?' exclaimed I. 'Have you bought me?'—'Yes,' replied he, 'and far too dearly for you to pretend that I have bestowed my money for nothing.'—'But,' said I, 'I would have you to know that this old woman, who assumes to be my grandmother, is no such thing.'—'And who then are thy parents?' said the marquis. 'I know not that,' answered I. 'Possibly they may be persons of genteel extraction, and possibly, it may be better for me to be utterly ignorant who they are. But this I must tell you, that in my present state of uncertainty on that head, I am rather inclined to imagine myself sprung from no ignoble house; and however ridiculous this imagination may appear to you, yet so great a power and influence has it upon my mind, that neither the most dazzling promises nor the cruellest menaces can ever make me capable of forgetting my duty. I will remain virtuous, as I have hitherto been, spite of whatever prejudice my present situation may authorise the world to entertain against me. The old woman had no right to sell me to you, and it is

in your power to oblige her to give you back the sum she has so unjustly received.'

"'Thou thinkest so?' said the marquis, sneering. 'But let me tell thee that I have not the least desire for it, and that thou shalt be mine in spite of thee, or all the fine imaginations thou hast taken into thy head. Look'ye, Jacintha, I have no faith in the virtue of a girl of fifteen, and thou wouldst not be the first inexorable fair one I have met with among a variety of others. Believe me, many others superior to thyself, have not made so much ado about the matter; but I see we must have more still.' I replied to this only by a flood of tears, and the marquis seemed embarrassed what course to take with me. I fell down at his feet, conjuring him to set me at liberty and abandon me to my fate. My prayers had quite a contrary effect. He lifted me up with an extraordinary emotion, threw himself on his knees before me, and said everything that the most lively passion can inspire. I do believe there is a something epidemical in these vehement agitations of mind; and indeed it seems evident from that daily experience which must strike spectators, on seeing a lively and real passion represented. I had no love for the marquis, but I could not help being uneasy at the vehemence of his emotion. He seized my hands, and might probably not only feel my pulse beat quicker than ordinary, but likewise observe me to have much more than my usual colour: and hence, the senses having a greater share in his love for me than the heart, he fancied this a favourable moment to take me by surprise. It would be ridiculous in me to attempt to persuade you that I am incapable of any weakness. In my opinion virtue, under certain circumstances, does not so much consist in a total insensibility, (which never can be a merit), as in the victory which a more powerful sentiment, or a stronger passion obtains over the impulses of nature.

But be this as it may, I am rejoiced in being able to tell you, that the marquis's first attempt to take advantage of my confusion, restored me on a sudden to my former strength. I tore myself from his arms, telling him that I would hear no more of an amour which I had not the least intention to encourage; and concluded with adding so much to persuade him fully of my mind in that respect, that he presently lost all patience. He flew into a violent rage against me and loaded me with reproaches; alleging that my prudery was nothing but an artifice by which I fancied to wind him up to the madness of sacrificing his honour to me; and swearing, that in spite of all my ancestors, were I even descended in a direct line from the Egyptian king Misphragmutosis, he would bring me to better terms with him. His choler and his threatenings terrified me to such a degree, that I made use of every method to soften him by good words; and indeed, availed myself of some which he might readily interpret as giving him room to hope for more favourable sentiments from me in future. By degrees he seemed to be somewhat appeased, and at length left me, with a promise, that if after three days' reflection which he assigned me, I persisted in my refusal of his offers, he would no longer object to my dismission. This he uttered with so ingenuous an air, that I believed him upon his word. I then passed the remainder of the evening with great composure, well satisfied with the victory which I flattered myself I had gained over him. I took up my theorbo, sung and chatted with little Stella, then took my supper and went quietly to bed. I was not got quite asleep, nor the taper yet burnt out, when all on a sudden I heard the door of my chamber open. I might very possibly have been frightened at the sight of a spectre, but the appearance of the marquis there terrified me infinitely more. He had something in his looks and manner so ferocious, that



I started up on observing him advance towards me. I endeavoured instantly to jump out of bed—for I never undressed myself entirely—but he caught hold of me and held me down, swearing I should absolutely surrender myself that moment. I cried out with all my might, and though he strove to stop my mouth with a pillow, I defended myself with such fury, that he found himself obliged to take breath a little, while I continued my outcries so loudly, that Stella, who slept in a distant room from mine, waked, and came in half-naked to my assistance. The sight of her redoubled my courage, weak as the assistance might seem which I had reason to expect from such a girl: accordingly, I repulsed the marquis with such violence, that he overthrew young Stella, and fell with her upon the floor. This circumstance, indifferent as it may appear in itself at first sight, saved me however from the impending danger.

"This honest girl had not one of those faces which are reckoned pretty in Spain, though amongst the negroes it would have wanted nothing but the complexion of the country to render its mistress a grace. But in return, the disorder into which her fall had put her dress, which was rather more than negligent, discovered to the marquis other imaginary perfections, by which nature seemed to have made her amends for the deficiencies of her face. He was so struck with them, that he determined to make them the instrument of avenging himself for my coldness. He told her, on raising her from the ground, what impression her charms had made upon him; and that in a style so figurative, and accompanied with such glowing expressions, as left her no time to treat it as trifling. She therefore fled away like Daphne, and he with greater speed pursued her like Apollo. In short, he shut himself up with her in her room, and in all likelihood soon thought no more of any Jacintha in the world. This unexpected

change of scene sprung an idea in my mind, which I instantly attempted to realise. I dressed myself with all expedition, and after waiting a little while, slipped gently toward Stella's room door, to learn whether I might believe myself secure. I did not dare hope for such another favourable moment. The old creature before-mentioned was gone to rest very quietly, as knowing that the marquis was himself in the house. I stole downstairs therefore unmolested, though in such fears that I hardly dared to breathe; and after groping about a good while, (for it was very dark, and I every moment afraid of hitting against something or other that might occasion a noise) at length I reached the door, but found it fast under lock and key. However, I crept about from side to side, till at last I found a kind of closet unlocked, which, instead of windows, had an opening in the wall next the street, grated with iron bars, and these I found placed so wide from each other, that without more hesitation, I made the utmost efforts to drag myself through them. The expedient succeeded, and not without great difficulty, and greater pains and bruises, I saw myself soon on the safe side of danger.

"You can scarely conceive the joy I felt on finding myself in the street. I ran with all my strength, without knowing whither; and the house I had just escaped from being in the suburbs of the town, I presently discovered I was got into the adjacent fields. Never did the heavens appear so beautifully covered with stars as now, while they favoured my flight. I commended me to the invisible protectors of innocence, and the moment I perceived myself in the high-road, set off again, running as fast as if I had wings instead of feet; so that by the time of sun-rising, I was about three leagues distant from Seville. I then exchanged my clothes for those of a young country girl about my own size, whom I met by the way; and after providing myself in the

village with a loaf and a bottle of milk, pursued my journey. In the day-time I rested me in the thickest shady spots I could find in the woods, and when the evening came on set forward, till I could meet with an inn where I might pass the night. I directed my course towards Calatrava, where I flattered myself I might find out the good lady upon whose kindness all my hopes were founded. But being obliged to travel afoot, (for out of a scrupulousness, carried perhaps too far, I had brought nothing from the old gipsy's house but the little money I had then about me, and that hardly enough to defray the expenses of my journey), my progress was very slow. I had leisure both to reflect upon my past adventures and think upon those to come: and unpropitious as the present might seem, it did not at all discourage me. The idea of having saved my innocence by so critical an expedient, rendered me alert and gay; and of all I had left behind me at the marquis's house, where everything was at my own disposal, I regretted nothing but the loss of my pretty ebony theorbo, which might have amused me as I walked along. However, I went on singing all day, and diverting myself with imitating the larks; in which I succeeded so well, that I won't say but the larks themselves might be jealous of my notes.

"In this manner, without meeting any other remarkable event, I at length arrived safely at the lady's seat I looked for. But guess at my astonishment, when they told me that the young lady, her only daughter, had been some months dead of the small-pox; and that her disconsolate mother, equally dead to all that had before given her delight, had soon after buried herself in a convent near Toledo! This sunk my spirits to that degree, that I fell sick, and continued so for some days. No situation could be more critical than mine. I was in want of money, not a soul in the place knew me, and the wretched

equipage I appeared in made me so much more liable to many inconveniences, as it might easily be perceived that I travelled in disguise. Nor could I think of any other expedient to extricate me from my troubles, except that of entering into the service of some lady; but how to meet with any body to give me a recommendation, was an obstacle which I could not get over.

"While I was in this perplexing state of anxiety, a little company of comedians came to the inn where I lodged. The manager's wife was a person of a genteel appearance, and her deportment so engaging that we soon became acquainted. We were pleased with each other at first sight, and she so won my confidence, that I ventured to inform her of my history, and the present situation of my affairs. She was in want of a young woman at that juncture to supply the place of her best actress, whom the Count de L— had lately taken from her, to the great disadvantage of the whole company. Accordingly, she put it to me whether I could not be persuaded to devote myself to the theatre; and to persuade me to it, she spared neither arguments nor entreaties. To a girl like me, who had hitherto acted in no other character than that of a strolling gipsy, the honour of becoming a heroine on the stage could not fail to be a very flattering idea. But notwithstanding my youth, I knew at the same time that the difference, in the public estimation, between a comedian and a gipsy is not so great as those theatrical princesses may imagine; so that the lady Arsenia had no little difficulty to overcome all my scruples. She seemed enchanted with my sentiments, and redoubled her caresses and persuasions to induce me to embrace a kind of life, which, in her idea, had nothing in it despicable or ignoble; and which could only be decried by the corrupt manners of the generality of its professors. In proof of her assertion, she told me some things which seemed to have



an air of truth; and though she could not deny but that a young actress was infinitely more exposed to the artifices of men than other females, yet she insisted upon it that courage and a firm resolution to be really virtuous in that state, would the more redound to her honour, as there were so many things in it to be put up with. In short, Arsenia's remonstrances, civilities, and warm wishes, the friendship she promised me, and my present situation, which left me no choice, at length surmounted my scruples, though they could not remove them; and I declared myself in favour of a profession for which Arsenia was pleased to tell me I had evidently great talents. I was accordingly received with the general approbation of the whole company, and after Arsenia had instructed me in the mysteries of their art, Corduba was fixed upon as the scene in which I was to make my first essay before the public. The spectators decided as favourably of me as they did of Arsenia, and I must confess to you, that the clapping of hands, and that lively expression of an universal satisfaction with which a young actress, who pleases as soon as she appears, is applauded from every quarter, makes a very agreeable impression all together; though by the way, a very dangerous one for the vanity of a young girl.

"And yet this sensibility for the applause I enjoyed during the whole representation, and for which I was perhaps principally indebted to the novelty of my figure, could not totally hinder certain humiliating self-reproaches from rising in my mind the moment I ceased to be Arpasia or Roxellana. I blushed to think I had been so destitute of shame as to abandon myself, as it were, to the public view, and under a borrowed character to excite passions which in some measure seemed to countenance unbridled youth to expect from me that I should favour their passions in private, and in my own proper person. These considerations, while they

embittered everything that seemed agreeable in my situation, served to make me the more circumspect in my conduct. My heart, which had never indulged vicious inclinations, was thereby more easily on its guard against seduction. But the great difficulty was how ever to save appearances in so slippery a sphere of life: how to hinder calumny itself from laying hold of anything in my conduct to reproach me with, and to silence its clamours respecting me. I know not whether I have entirely succeeded in my purpose; but it would be ungrateful in me should I forget to assure you that Arsenia, whom I every day found more worthy my friendship and esteem, was of the greatest utility to me in the arduous task; supplying to me the place of a mother, and in every respect seconding my best intentions. She never left me out of her sight; I ate and lodged with her; her conversation and her example at once realised and confirmed my own sentiments, and her character, to which none could help doing justice, screened me from the malevolence of such as lay it down for a maxim, that a female who appears virtuous, is in fact no more than wary and cautious. In a few weeks we left Corduba and repaired to Granada, where we stayed almost a year performing with a constant run of approbation. Here it was that I had the good fortune to commence an acquaintance with Don Eugenio. The high reputation he was held in, both on account of his merit and his politeness, too much distinguished him from the crowd of young gentlemen for Arsenia to hesitate at receiving his visits, and those of a few of his intimate friends; visits, which instead of bringing censure upon us, were rather considered as a proof that we were in higher esteem than our condition in life might seem to announce. In a society like this in which I have now the honour to speak, it would ill become me to make a mystery of Don Eugenio's too obliging partiality for me; and it will be allowed me to



declare, that unless I had been stupid even to insensibility, I could not but have been touched with his sentiments: nor do I blush to own, that from the beginning of our acquaintance I felt for him such an esteem as I had never before or since felt for any person, nor perhaps ever shall feel for any other. If ever I have had reason to be proud, it is of the friendship with which he hath always honoured me. The world, which generally determines without understanding the cause, or will not give itself the trouble to examine matters with attention, has supposed an artifice and cunning in my conduct, of which the sincerity of my heart was ever incapable. But the idea that Don Eugenio knew me better, has always made my mind quiet on that head; and the execution of a plan which I have long laid down for myself will, I hope, perfectly justify that friendship whereof he has not found me hitherto unworthy."

CHAPTER XIII

DON EUGENIO CONTINUES THE BEAUTIFUL JACINTHA'S NARRATION

ON speaking as above, the amiable Jacintha appeared to be so much affected, that she found herself obliged to stop a moment, in spite of the efforts she made to conceal her emotion. "Permit me, dear Jacintha," said Don Eugenio, without seeming to have taken notice of her confusion, "permit me to go on with your relation, since the part of your history which you are now entering upon, is where my own adventures begin to be blended with yours."

Accordingly, he thus proceeded: "It was now almost a twelvemonth since I set out with Don Gabriel for Granada, where I had several affairs to settle. I went one evening to the play, and there I saw Jacintha. She pleased me, and she affected me: the former was a natural consequence of her personal attractions—for whom, indeed, would she not please? the latter was as natural an effect of the character she then represented. The universal applause she possessed, and which seemed to me to confound her own person with that she was to represent, did not dazzle me. I observed that she was no more than a very moderate actress. In some places indeed, where she was to point out noble, natural, and inartificial sentiments, she appeared incomparable; but the poet had taken care to give her that opportunity but very seldom. In all the rest I thought I could observe she did herself a



violence, in affecting sentiments and passions that were foreign to her. This remark, in my opinion, was greatly to her advantage: nor do I really think that during the whole evening she ever pleased me more than when, considered as an actress, she should have pleased me least. I left the play-house not a little uneasy to find that the image of this young girl pursued me wherever I went; I thought I saw her before my eyes the whole evening: the affecting tone of her voice was continually sounding in my ears; and nothing I could meet with in the company where I spent the rest of the day, was capable of diverting my thoughts, or in the least abating the emphasis and vivacity of these first impressions. For some time I paid no regard to it; at length I strove to dissipate these ideas, but still they returned incessantly to the charge, and it took me up several days before I could make these troublesome guests give place to others which demanded my immediate attention.

"A few days after this I visited the theatre again, and waited in fruitless expectation the appearance of Jacintha. Her place that evening was supplied by another, who had the talent of transforming herself into every character imaginable; a qualification which properly constitutes the good actor, and which this person possessed in a degree of perfection infinitely superior to Jacintha. But still she displeased me, and yet I could give no other reason, but because she was not Jacintha. Never did I wait for the last act of a play with so much impatience. I gained some account of Jacintha from one of my friends: next I learnt Arsenia's character, who passed for her aunt, and was also informed of the retired life which they both led. This intelligence only served to increase my curiosity, and I resolved to become acquainted with them. Accordingly, I paid them a visit, and found that my friend had said nothing too much of Arsenia. It is so rare a

thing to meet with virtue, generous principles, and elevated sentiments in an actress, that the world is not to be blamed, if, when it finds all these qualities in such a subject, it looks upon them to be just as much the effect of art, as those other characters are which the poets give them to represent. I made my observations upon Arsenia for a good while, with that degree of distrust which her situation in life inspired; but I found her gain upon me just as much as another, that had made a great ostentation of her virtue, would have lost by such a scrutiny. You may judge whether I was less attentive to the examination of Jacintha. 'Tis true, her tender age seemed to absolve her from every apprehension of artifice and dissimulation. The innocence which accompanied all her actions effectually screened her from all suspicions of this nature: but the pleasure of seeing that idea, which I had conceived of her from the first, now more and more confirmed, made me examine her with the minutest exactness in my power. That same sincerity, and amiable simplicity of heart, which rendered her incapable of those little artful tricks by which the fair sex, whether from vanity or whatever other cause, often lay snares for our hearts; these at the same time hindered her from perceiving that she was critically observed. Hence, she had as little intention to conceal as to display herself. She pleased without designing to please; and that nameless charm which made her slightest motion interesting, sat upon her as naturally and as easily as the fine glow of health that animated her cheek. Her actions appeared to have but one end, and that the only one which they naturally ought to have. She seemed unconscious that her eyes, all animated as they were, could be of any other use to her than to see with. If she laughed or smiled it was not to show her fine teeth; and hence she would let twenty opportunities slip by her within an hour of displaying to the company



the beauty of a fine arm, or the seducing delicacy of a charming little foot; opportunities of which many another female might have availed herself with pleasure. Your presence, fair Jacintha, excuses me from continuing the picture, which I should neither be happy enough, nor sufficiently skilful to finish. Innocence has a thousand native charms which cannot well be painted, and which it is equally impossible for art to imitate: charms, whose impression is the more dangerous, as they appear mild and innocent like itself. My heart was already entirely hers, before I had considered whither those sentiments might tend, with which, though unwittingly, she had inspired me. I accustomed myself, insensibly, to see her every day, and as insensibly, all that had formerly amused my imagination lost its charms with me. Her presence alone delighted me, and I felt nothing but languor when deprived of its relief. I withdrew myself by degrees from all other societies, pleasures, and diversions, to enjoy unmolested the only pleasure which my heart was capable of tasting. Every minute that by chance detained me from seeing her so soon as usual, seemed an insupportable space of time, and every evening I spent in her and Arsenia's company (for I never saw her by herself alone) appeared but as a transient moment.

"The reproaches of my friends at length obliged me to give them some account of that tender inclination which seemed to have extinguished in my heart all others; and the outcry raised against me on that account, soon discovered to my mind that this inclination, instead of being a volatile amusement or an airy fancy, as some thought they had a right to suppose it, was in fact a passion that must decide the happiness or the infelicity of my life. I shall not tire you with a circumstantial detail of all that passed in my heart in consequence of this discovery. They who fancy that love can be

combated with success, mean nothing more than a fantastic chimera, which they very improperly call by that appellation. Those rapid ardours which beauty only, or a mere reciprocal impulse of imagination have kindled, and which are kept alive by animal desire; those arbitrary ties in which the heart had no share, formed perhaps by vanity, vexation, curiosity, caprice, or custom; given up on the same principles, when and how you please; and which, merely to give them more dignity, are often called love, though they have not the least connection or correspondence with it—all this, I say, may easily, and without much pains, be combated. But no one ever gained the victory over a real love, founded upon a secret correspondence of hearts, and built on a reciprocal esteem: nay, the very obstacles opposed to it, serve only to render the victory more complete and decisive on the side of love. I urged every imaginable objection against myself; I felt the whole force of those objections, and was but too well informed, that people seldom despise with impunity those precedents on record which declare against such amours. But what could all these considerations avail against an inclination, the source of an internal, heartfelt felicity, and to which I was ready at any time to sacrifice every other satisfaction? a sacrifice indeed, for which he who truly loves thinks himself amply recompensed by a single look, or a single starting tear from the object of his tender passion. But why should I wish to urge excuses before this little society of friends who require no such at my hands; indeed, were any one here present incapable of the sensation I am speaking of, from such an one I could expect no excuse at all.

"I resolved then, with all possible intrepidity, to pass for a madman in the estimate of this last-mentioned species, and accordingly used every means in my power to secure a sole interest in that



love which constituted my only happiness. I had now been acquainted with Jacintha some months, and had taken my measures in consequence before she herself could perceive that I was her admirer; my conduct towards her was so much upon the reserve, and the tenderness I had shown for her had so much more the air of a brother's friendship for a sister, than that of love. Arsenia, however, began to suspect something of my designs. She guessed, indeed, that I was wishing for the pleasure of seeing that sympathy which seemed to exist between our hearts, unfold itself gradually in Jacintha's, and yet sometimes she could not help doubting, whether the use I purposed one day to make of that circumstance might be so innocent as she could wish, on her dear Jacintha's account. Though she might not suppose there was any room to distrust my manner of thinking or my principles, yet, on the other hand, she was fearful lest the prejudices of the world, or perhaps the consideration of my own fortune, might set us at too great a distance from each other, and the rather, as she could hardly suppose me to have courage or love sufficient to overcome those obstacles. She knew that the world would much more easily pardon me an engagement by which I should only sacrifice Jacintha to my desires than excuse another engagement by which (according to the corrupt maxims of a licentious public) my honour might receive a stain. And as to my manner of thinking, she understood mankind too well to take the principles of a young man as sufficient vouchers against his passions. These considerations, as she herself afterwards told me, did not indeed seem urgent enough for her to think of repressing, by premature apprehensions, an innocent inclination, which by almost imperceptible degrees unfolded itself in the heart of her young friend. However, she thought it but right to keep a more attentive eye upon me, and in a delicate manner to give

me a seasonable opportunity of explaining what she supposed to be the real sentiments of my heart.*

"Among the number of young persons who had declared themselves admirers of the amiable Jacintha, and as such had exercised their pretended right to tease her by those poor impertinences and shallow conceits which they vented behind the scenes, there were some who would gladly have carried their designs upon her to a greater length, but from their doubts of success while, as they were pleased to observe, I stood in their way; though I had no reason to fear that any of this stamp could ever be formidable to Jacintha's heart, it was, notwithstanding, a very disagreeable circumstance to be unable to release her from such a swarm of importunate triflers; and yet still, thought I, 'tis a very natural inconvenience for a rose to suffer, that the moment it blooms forth, all sorts of insects should hover and buzz around it. Jacintha's conduct, however, had something in it that constantly inspired the coxcombs with such a kind of deference and respect as at once surprised herself, and made me just as easy on that head as if no such intruders had existed, or I had been wholly indifferent to the general object of their pursuit. But about that season Don Ferdinand de Zamora came to Granada, and the first time he saw Jacintha on the stage conceived such a violent passion for her, in his way, as did not long leave me to enjoy this calm tranquillity. A rival, who to the beauty of a Narcissus joined the unbridled licentiousness of a Satyr, who had accustomed himself to give free scope to all his passions, and whenever it served to accommodate his brutality, made no scruple of dissipating without bounds the vast fortunes which came to him by the death of his parents. Such a rival as this, little as I feared him with respect to Jacintha's heart, was formidable indeed on many other accounts. He made his first declaration of love by presents,



which possibly many a prude might have been unable to resist. Jacintha sent them back to him, without once supposing that she made a great sacrifice in so doing, either to her own innocence, or to my love; which latter, though it seemed constantly confined within the pale of friendship, could not be a mystery to Don Ferdinand. She could not, however, consistently with decorum, refuse to receive his visits, or to partake of those extravagantly-superb entertainments, which, to gratify his ample vanity, he gave her, Arsenia, and others belonging to the theatre. My heart paid dear for it, but still I thought it best in this dangerous circumstance, if it were so, to leave Jacintha to the motions of her own mind.

"The whole city of Granada could testify that I had never seen Jacintha, except in the company of Arsenia or other persons; so that Don Ferdinand might be the less inclined to believe I could be his rival, as, after a strict inquiry into my conduct, he was unable to discover the least circumstance that could render me suspected. And even if he had entertained suspicions on that head, it might have served only to stimulate him to redouble his assiduities towards Jacintha. But neither his beauty nor his brilliant equipage, neither his presents nor his feasts, nor that prodigious quantity of odes and elegies, in which he complained of the hardness of her adamantine heart, or stood astonished how the snow of her fair bosom could be so cold: neither these, nor all of these, were capable of striking a single spark of compassion from that little flinty heart though the whole corps of Granadian poets attacked it most unmercifully with the name of Don Ferdinand de Zamora. At length the latter thought proper to offer his heart, his presents, and his elegies to another actress, who, excepting prudishness—as she called it—was in every respect Jacintha's competitor. The more reason I had to

be satisfied with the issue of this adventure, the more impatient I grew to rescue Jacintha from those inconveniences of a theatrical life, to which such events exposed her. I now thought myself so well assured both of the character and dispositions of Jacintha, that it seemed needless to make further scrutiny upon the subject, and accordingly determined to explain myself ingenuously to Arsenia, and concert measures with her for the execution of my plan; when all on a sudden she was attacked with a consumptive disorder, the progress of which was so rapid, as soon to put her out of all hopes of a cure. This therefore induced her to anticipate me upon the subject. Accordingly, she requested a private conference with me; the sole object of which, excepting a short enumeration of her own adventures, was Jacintha. 'I love her,' said this valuable woman, 'as if she was my own daughter, and the circumstances in which I must leave her are the only things that could make me wish for the prolongation of a life, which, through a series of misfortunes, and a state of anxiety which can end only in my death, hath long since been burdensome to me. My love for Jacintha is the more impartial, as it is by no means the effect of a mechanical instinct, but rather solely founded on the qualities of her heart. Oh, how highly doth she merit a better lot! Yet what hopes can I conceive that her fortune should ever be answerable to that merit? Situated as she is, there is no course of life she can choose, but must be attended with dangers. Youth and innocence, accompanied with so many charms, are a very dangerous endowment for persons of our sex, unless they are likewise accompanied with the advantages of birth and fortune. The same innocence, and the same charms, which would inspire a respectful love, or at least honourable views towards a young lady of quality or a rich heiress, inspire none but unbridled passions towards a girl



destitute of all such advantages, and tend only to excite such desires as pave the path of her ruin; and the man who might have thought it no shame to cast himself at the feet of such an one, and, in a rapid enthusiasm to tell her how much he adores her person, and that she is the divinity of his heart, would be offended at the bare suspicion that he could have the least idea of a matrimonial connection. Judge then, Don Eugenio, whether I can be easy respecting the fate of Jacintha. She is not formed for the condition to which her ill-fortune condemns her; and her innocence and softness of temper seem only to render her sensibility more exquisitely tender. I have not the least apprehension for her with respect to all those brilliant fops that hover about her, and are as incapable of inspiring love, as they are of conceiving it. These are not the people that I fear. But should she meet with a man who is capable of gaining her esteem by the qualities of a noble heart, by virtuous sentiments, and a respectful tenderness—a man who could conceal his desires under the appearance of great disinterestedness, and insensibly introduce the love in her heart under the name of friendship —a man who should have sufficient patience to wait for the moment in which (disarmed by that confidence which she imagines herself to owe him, disarmed by the innocence of her own sentiments, or by the fascinating charm of sympathy, or by certain secret instincts which, in the simplicity of her inexperienced heart, she might confound with the tender emotions of that heart) she may yield herself to his desires as a voluntary sacrifice, without distrust, and without reserve. Ah! Don Eugenio! —how am I apprehensive that she may already have met with this man! Pardon me, generous friend! my present situation authorises me to speak to you without disguise. A person, who in a little while will have nothing more to fear or to hope for

from men, can pierce through that veil of delusion which so commonly imposes upon, staggers, or restrains the judgment, while we are busily occupied in the affairs of this lower world. You will not doubt me, signior, when I inform you, that I have long since been apprised of your love for Jacintha, and you know better than I, that you have but too well succeeded in the plans you have concerted respecting the best and tenderest of hearts. I esteem you, Don Eugenio, and but a few days since should have thought I had offended you, had I expressed the least shadow of distrust or diffidence. But now, signior; now that every other care gives place to that of Jacintha's safety, what sentiments would you have me to entertain of your inclination towards her?'

"Here this good creature proceeded to unfold to me her apprehensions, and at length closed her discourse by conjuring me, with tears in her eyes, to show every proper respect to the innocence of her young friend. She saw me so sensibly affected, that it was impossible for her to doubt my sincerity in the declarations I uttered on the subject. I related to her, in the amplest manner, all that had passed in my heart from the first moment I had seen Jacintha; how far the desire of seeing her happy had ever prevailed over the consideration of my own views or interests, and that I was firmly resolved henceforward, to sacrifice every other consideration, however important they might be in themselves, to our mutual felicity. I begged of her to prepare her friend accordingly, and permit me to make my declaration to Jacintha in her own presence. This was done, and the amiable Jacintha made no hesitation to testify how much she was affected with my conduct. 'These tears,' said she, looking at me with overflowing eyes; 'these true witnesses of that perfect confidence I place in your integrity, and which I wish not to conceal—I owe



them to your generous sentiments. But alas! these are all that the unfortunate Jacintha can command or do to evidence her gratitude!' So saying, she related to me the whole story of her life, with an ingenuity that rendered her a thousand times more amiable in my eyes.

"'And now, judge for yourself, Don Eugenio,' continued she, after finishing her narrative, 'judge whether I should not merit the most odious of titles could I wish to abuse your exceeding kindness before I have obtained an absolute certainty respecting what may, indeed, be only a self-delusion, the creature of my vanity; though still I cannot help flattering myself, that possibly I may have less cause to blush at my origin than the gipsy woman, who brought me up, would have had me believe.' In vain did Arsenia unite with me to persuade her that she carried her scruples too far; she continued firm in the resolution of retiring to a convent whenever she should lose Arsenia. All I could at last obtain from her was, that she would leave the choice of the place to me, with a solemn promise not to engage herself by any vows, without my previous consent. I wrote immediately to a friend at Seville, desiring him to get and send me the necessary intelligence respecting the old gipsy woman: but I received for answer, that the corregidor's strict watch kept over the house, had a little while before obliged her to consult her safety by a speedy flight. Disagreeable as this circumstance was to me, I did not give up the hopes of meeting with the old woman one day or other. Accordingly, I took my measures for that purpose, flattering myself I should be able to extort from her an account of the manner in which Jacintha fell into her hands; but in case she escaped my search, I determined not to despair of bringing Jacintha, by my constancy, at length to change her mind. My sister's affairs, which indispensably required my presence, obliged me in the

meantime to quit Grenada, leaving the object of my tenderest affections with her worthy friend, from whom nothing but death could part her, and whose daily declining health left me little hopes of ever seeing her again."

CHAPTER XIV

JACINTHA'S HISTORY CONCLUDED. DON SYLVIO'S CONJECTURES UPON THE SUBJECT, WITH PREPARATIONS FOR AN EPISODICAL INTERLUDE, WHICH FEW OF OUR READERS WILL THINK TEDIOUS

INTERESTING as the above history of the amours of Don Eugenio and the beautiful Jacintha might have been to themselves, and possibly to their immediate hearers, we are not at all disposed to blame our readers, if they secretly wish to see an end of them. To a certain good sort of people indeed, calm and cool in sentiment, and who have either forgotten "the heyday of the blood," or never felt its impulse, to such there certainly cannot be a more tiresome creature in the world than a lover relating the history of his own heart. We shall content ourselves then with observing that Jacintha resumed the discourse, and continued the account of her adventures from the death of her friend, till the lucky moment in which Don Eugenio and Don Gabriel, supported by our hero, rescued her from the hands of Don Ferdinand de Zamora. These adventures, elucidated by the confession which the faithful Teresilla had been obliged to make to her mistress of her secret correspondence with Don Ferdinand, and the several petit-treasons she had committed for a considerable time past, supplied all that had hitherto been incomprehensible to the lady herself. For unfortunately for this worthy waiting-woman, one of

Don Ferdinand's letters, which, instead of burning, she fancied she had safe about her, had somehow (though nobody knows how) dropped out of her pocket in Pedrillo's bed-chamber; and as everything, in a manner, necessarily conspires, when a gross fraud approaches to its discovery, this same letter fell into the hands of Don Eugenio, on his entering that chamber by chance the very morning after our hero's sudden departure from the inn.

Jacintha accordingly informed them in what manner Don Ferdinand de Zamora, instead of giving up his designs as he pretended to do, had found means to gain over her attendant; what schemes he had laid, in concert with Teresilla, for carrying her off on her way to Valencia, a journey for which she had been preparing herself from the death of Arsenia; how he had executed his design; what pains he had taken to soften her, endeavouring by a more respectful carriage to inculcate a better opinion of his views concerning her; and lastly, the fortunate event that Don Eugenio, instead of being, as she herself thought him, at Valencia, was at Lirias, where, through a still more lucky chance, he had effected her deliverance, by lighting upon them in his ride between Lirias and Julilla.

The fair Jacintha upon this occasion forgot not to return our hero her repeated thanks for the generosity with which he had exposed himself for her and Don Eugenio's account. To these civilities Don Sylvio replied in the gallant style of the Knights of Graal, or the Round Table. He told her how much he esteemed himself obliged to her for being thus permitted to hear her history from her own mouth; assuring her, that it needed only to see and to hear her, to be persuaded she was of an original as illustrious as her personal merit, although her birth was still concealed under a mysterious obscurity. He could not, however, help intimating his astonishment, that in a history which had struck him as

very extraordinary, there was not the least notice taken of any fairy's interposition; accordingly, he asked her very gravely, how it happened that she had observed so great a silence on that head, it not being at all comprehensible that the fairies and enchanters should have had no concern in the adventures of a young lady so perfect in character and of such excellent endowments? The countenance with which he put this question was so serious, that the two ladies could not forbear laughing, though they had previously agreed to pay all imaginable respect to his folly.

"If you wished me," said Jacintha, "to make a fairy-tale of my history, why did you not tell me so beforehand? If I had thought it would have been more agreeable on that account, it might have been very easy for me to have made a Carabossa of the old gipsy woman, to have turned the good lady of Calatrava into a Luminosa, and to have transformed Don Ferdinand de Zamora, at least, into a sylph or a salamander, if not into a malicious dwarf."

"Pardon me," said Donna Felicia, "if in my opinion your narrative would have gained no inconsiderable addition by so doing. For do but conceive how frigid the poet must appear, who should content himself with telling us, 'Daphnis or Coridon rested himself, and took the air in the shade;' or, 'He quenched his thirst at a fountain.' But when he informs us, 'That, at the wishes of Flora, the flowers spontaneously sprung from the earth, and formed the softest couch for beautiful Celadon's repose; that the wanton zephyrs gave him to breathe a fresher balmy air, wafting ambrosial odours, borne lightly to him on their roseate wings, and that a nymph, charming as young Hebe herself, with gracious smiles presented him the purest water in a cup of pearls,'—then it is, and then only, we suppose the poet to have done his duty, by representing nature as he ought to do."

"But possibly" ,said Don Gabriel, who observed our hero a little at a loss, as not knowing how to take these sallies from the two ladies, "possibly the fair Jacintha designed nothing more than to give us a summary idea of her adventures. For after all, the fairies undoubtedly may have been the secret springs and chief agents in all these wonderful events. And now I think of it——"

"Nay, pardon me, Don Gabriel," interrupted Jacintha, "I protest to you with the greatest seriousness in the world, that to my knowledge I have not given the fairies the least trouble on my account. Nor can I believe you would wish to persuade me that those chimerical beings, who make such a deal to do in tales of the fairies, ever existed elsewhere."

"But is it possible to doubt of it?" cried Don Sylvio. "Don't you see, then, that we must reject all historical credibility."

"Don't be warm, my dear Don Sylvio," replied Don Gabriel, smiling; "you see Jacintha is only disposed to be merry; but indeed, if she was speaking seriously, we shall soon make her change her opinion. Possibly she may be unacquainted with any other tales than those of Blue-beard, Red-bonnet, or the Good Little Mouse. She would talk very differently were she to hear, for instance, the story of Prince Biribinquer, a story of indisputable notoriety, being taken from the sixth book of the famous Palæphatus's incredible history."

"I must confess," said Don Sylvio, "the prince you mention is utterly unknown to me, and I should be very glad——"

"You would be still more so," interrupted Don Gabriel, "if it were possible for you to represent to yourself beforehand the extraordinary and interesting nature of his adventures. I don't think it would be saying too much, were I to assure you that they exceed all that has ever been seen or met with hitherto in any fairy tales whatsoever."



"You excite my curiosity," said Don Eugenio. "The incredible histories of a writer who disputes antiquity with Homer himself, are undoubtedly such vouchers as no one will ever think of contesting; and though the sixth book has been long since lost to the public, it does not follow but that Don Gabriel, whose profound erudition in occult philosophy is generally allowed, may know much more of it than many others."

"I am of your mind," said Donna Felicia, "and could venture any wager that even though this sixth book should never have been written at all, Don Gabriel's extensive science would be more than sufficient to relate us the history of Prince Biribinquer word for word, just as it would have appeared in that sixth book, if it ever was written."

"You are pleased to be merry, Donna Felicia," very gravely replied Don Gabriel. "I grant you the history of Prince Biribinquer has lain hitherto unknown, but this does not at all affect its veracity; and with your leave, madam, I should choose in this matter to appeal to Don Sylvio. He will see whether there be anything in it that can render the fidelity of the historian suspicious."

"Ay, and we shall see too," answered Donna Felicia, "for I hope you will be kind enough to permit the rest of us to be hearers at least, though we must not presume to be judges."

Upon this every one present expressing a desire to hear a story, of which the bare name of Biribinquer seemed already to promise such remarkable things, it was agreed, that they should meet again for that purpose in the little Myrtle Grove, after their siesta, or afternoon's nap, was over. And now the sun beginning to be troublesome, the company took their walk homeward through a green shady arbour that led up to the house.

While Jacintha was relating her history, an idea, it seems, struck into our hero's mind, which he

discovered to Don Eugenio the moment they were alone together.

"What would you say to it, Don Eugenio," said he, "if Jacintha should be my sister?"

"Your sister!" exclaimed Don Eugenio; "what then, have you ever lost one?"

"I had one," replied Don Sylvio, "who was lost at about three years old, without anybody's being able to learn what became of her."

"Heavens!" cried Don Eugenio, "how happy should I be if your conjectures were well founded; and to say the truth, I am astonished to think that certain features of both your faces, which are very like, should not have struck my attention sooner. But cannot you recollect any circumstance —may not there be some kind of index that might turn our doubts into certainty?"

"If there were any trusting to instinct," replied Don Sylvio, "I should be strongly tempted to take the first emotion I felt on seeing her face for the voice of blood—but I am afraid I flattered myself with a vain hope."

"And why so?" demanded Don Eugenio, with great impatience.

"Because," replied the other, "I find a circumstance in Jacintha's story which embarrasses me."

"Oh! I beg of you explain yourself," interrupted Don Eugenio; "I am on the rack every moment you keep me in this uncertainty."

"Jacintha was brought up by a gipsy, and, as she supposes, was torn from her parents," said Don Sylvio. "The time and her age agree exactly together, for my sister was pretty near three years old when she disappeared. She might have been now about the same age as Jacintha. The difference of names, indeed, (for my sister's was Seraphina) is no great matter, for she may have been made to change her name: but that circumstance of the gipsy spoils all. It was supposed, indeed, in my father's family,



that an old gipsy had carried off my sister; but it was supposed upon very slight grounds. For my own part, I have strong reasons to be persuaded that the pretended gipsy was a fairy——"

At these words Don Eugenio was ready to lose all patience, and found the greatest difficulty in the world to repress the sudden emotions of his mind. "If you have no other scruples," at length he cried, after some little recollection, "we have nothing more to make us uneasy. What should hinder us from allowing that the gipsy, who stole away your sister, might be the fairy who rendered her invisible? As to the name, it is no matter; and trust me, all your Carabossas, Fanfreluches, Cucumbras, and Magotines, were neither more nor less fairies than this gipsy woman. Who knows, at the long run, whether we may not find that this fairy influence has had more to do in Jacintha's history than she herself may imagine?"

Don Sylvio thought this an admirable idea; accordingly, both of them employed all their ingenuity to fortify their minds in the imagination which so highly flattered their inclinations. Our hero had no doubt but the mystery would be soon cleared up, and perhaps before it was expected, by the fairy's sudden appearance; while Don Eugenio concerted new measures for finding out and securing the gipsy, as flattering himself that he should be able to obtain better intelligence from her respecting his dear Jacintha's genealogy, than he could get for love or money from all the fairies in the world.

During this conference Donna Felicia had retired to her closet, where, while Laura was dressing Jacintha, she enjoyed the satisfaction of giving a loose to those pleasing reveries which incessantly occupied her mind. She had reason indeed to be satisfied with the advances she had already made upon Don Sylvio's heart, but she might possibly have been much more so if her own heart had had

a less share in her views than her vanity. Love, however, is so timid a creature, as often to fancy itself at the greatest distance from its happiness, when it is really nearest to it. Donna Felicia for once found herself in this situation, and the extravagant idea she formed to herself of the difficulty there was in chasing from Don Sylvio's heart the blue butterfly, made her apprehend it indispensably necessary to combat him with more powerful weapons than all she had hitherto employed for that purpose; nor could she help thinking it might be greatly to her disadvantage, if she left him time to put himself into a state of defence. According to her opinion, the heart of this young man could only be carried by storm, and every minute in which her eyes did not dart their looks at him, seemed, as t were, to repair the breaches which might otherwise have been made in the citadel of his breast. In the midst of these reflections, she took it into her head to send for him to her toilette; and after having, in less than a quarter of an hour, sometimes approved and sometimes rejected this idea, at length it gained the ascendant, and notice was forthwith sent by Laura, under the token of an idea which Laura understood, to inform our hero that her lady was visitable.

Here would be a fine opportunity for us to display our talents in the exhibition of pictures, which require a certain delicacy of pencil: as, for instance, by analysing the sentiments, and uncovering the most latent springs that actuate the human heart; —if we wished to enter upon a detail of all that passed in this interview at which Jacintha and Laura were both present. But, as our vanity is amply gratified by the samples which we fancy have already been given our readers, they will permit us, without sacrificing our convenience to their pleasure, to content ourselves this once with telling them, that the beautiful Felicia perfectly succeeded in her

designs; or, if this may seem too vague, we will inform them, that all those fantastical raptures into which fairies and the love of a chimerical object had from time to time thrown our hero, were no more, in comparison with those he now experienced, than a blue butterfly in competition with a charming young widow of eighteen.

If Donna Felicia had an opportunity at her toilette to show our hero her material beauties in the most variegated and advantageous manner; she did not fail during their repast to augment the enchantment produced by those intellectual charms of her mind, which are ever so seducing under the veil of visible beauty. The heat of the afternoon was that day so supportable, that the pleasure of an animated conversation made all parties forget their siesta. Don Sylvio, who neither saw, nor heard, nor lived but for his goddess, might even have forgot the tale with which Don Gabriel had promised to regale the company, had not Jacintha, as they walked in the evening through a little grove of myrtles, put him in mind of it. Don Gabriel, having no other design in the narrative than to see how far our hero would carry his prejudices of imagination, had already prepared the rest of the company to expect the relation of a tale, the most extravagant and ridiculous that could be conceived. This however only served to excite their curiosity the more, and made them eagerly wish to know how he would come off in this trial of the fancy. No sooner therefore had Jacintha mentioned the name of Prince Biribinquer, than the whole company united with her in requesting Don Gabriel to gratify their impatience, by relating the promised history. Don Sylvio himself, the moment he heard a fairy-tale brought upon the carpet, emerged from those pleasing reveries in which the idea of his beauteous Felicia long held him, as it were, buried in sweet oblivion. Such is the force of custom; and thus it

is that an object, however comparatively vain and insignificant, when once it gets possession, and sufficient scope to exercise a certain empire over our imagination and senses, can, at its first summons, hinder the most perfect object from remaining master of our attention. After having seated themselves therefore in a bower composed of jasmines, Don Gabriel first began with a short preamble to the honour and glory of his faithful historian Palæphatus; and then entered upon that relation with which we purpose to entertain our readers in the following book.



BOOK VI

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF PRINCE BIRIBINQUER

In a country, of which no mention is made either in Strabo or Martiniere, there formerly lived a king, who, as having employed no historians himself, was of so little service to their lucrative interests, that, inflamed with a desire of vengeance, they mutually united to render even his very existence doubtful to posterity. All their malice, however, could not prevent a few authentic documents being preserved, in which is to be found almost everything that could be said about him. According to these documents he was a very honest, good sort of a king; made his four meals a day, slept very well, and was moreover such a lover of peace and quietness, that it was forbidden, under great pains and penalties, even to pronounce in his presence the name of sword, musket, cannon, etc. etc. What was most remarkable in his person, say these same documents, was a fair round belly, of so majestic a periphery, that the biggest monarchs of his time were all forced to yield to him in point of corporature. We cannot positively assert whether the surname of Great, which was given to him, and which he through life enjoyed, was assigned him on account of this circumstance, or for any other private reasons; but it is very certain, that throughout the whole extent of his kingdom, there had never been a creature whom this surname of his had cost a single drop of blood—a consideration, by the way,

of no little moment to some great folks, if they knew how to make a proper use of it.

When it was thought necessary that his majesty should marry, as well out of friendship to his people as to preserve in his family a successor to the crown, the academy of sciences was not a little puzzled how to determine, according to the allowed grandeur of the royal corpulency and other proportions, the suitable figure of such a princess as might be deemed worthy to answer the national expectations. After a variety of academical sittings, they at length hit upon the desired figure, and at length, by sending ambassadors into all the courts of Asia, met with a princess who perfectly answered to the model prescribed. The joy occasioned by her arrival was extraordinary, and the nuptials were celebrated with so much pomp, that at least fifty thousand couples of his majesty's subjects were obliged to determine in favour of celibacy, to answer the regal expenses on this memorable event. The president of the Academy, who, though the worst geometrician of his time, knew how to arrogate to himself all the merit of the above-mentioned invention, now reasonably concluded that his reputation depended upon the queen's fecundity, and being infinitely better skilled in the experimental department of natural philosophy than in geometry, found out I know not what method of verifying the academy's calculations. In short, the queen was brought to bed of the handsomest young prince that ever eyes beheld; and so great was the king's joy at the event, that he instantly nominated the president his prime vizier.

As soon as the prince was born, twenty thousand young girls of singular beauty assembled, who had been previously convoked from every corner of the empire, in order to make choice amongst them of a nurse for his royal highness. It must be confessed, that among the whole twenty thousand there was not a single maiden to be found. But, however,



they were judged so much the properer to fulfil the honourable charge in question—for which, by the way, every one thought herself the most worthy, because the king's first physician had expressly enjoined that the choice should fall upon the fairest. The commission to choose the fairest from among twenty thousand fine girls is not so easy a matter as some might possibly imagine; accordingly, the first physician, though he had a pair of excellent spectacles upon his nose, met with no small difficulty to find out a sufficient reason why he should give one the preference to another; hence the third day had almost elapsed before he was able to reduce the probationers from twenty thousand to a select number of twenty-four. But as it became necessary to make a decision, he was just upon the point of choosing from among these twenty-four girls a large brunetta in preference to the rest—by reason that above all others she had the smallest mouth and finest neck and bosom; qualities which, as he asserted, Galen and Avicenna absolutely require to constitute a good nurse—when lo! all on a sudden, and beyond all expectation, they beheld a bee approach, of a prodigious size, and with her a black she-goat, who both of them demanded admission to, and an audience of the queen.

"Beautiful queen," said the bee, "I am informed you are in want of a nurse for the handsome prince your son. If you have sufficient confidence in me to give me the preference to these two-footed creatures, you shall not repent it. I shall suckle the prince with none but milk of orange flowers, and to your heart's full content you shall see how he will thrive upon it, and grow into good plight and beauty. His breath shall smell as deliciously as the jasmine, his saliva shall be sweeter than canary-wine, and his clouts and blankets——"

"Great queen," interrupted the she-goat, "as a friend I advise you to be especially on your guard

against this bee. 'Tis true, if you are particularly solicitous to have your young prince become a sweet, spruce little creature, she will be the properest person you can pitch upon for the purpose : but observe, what a snake lurks concealed under the flowers ; she will endow him with such a sting as shall draw upon him infinite evils. I am only a poor mean she-goat, but, by my beard I swear, that my milk shall do him more good than any that the bee can give him ; and though he will neither produce nectar nor ambrosia, I promise you in return that he will be the most valiant, wise, and happy prince that ever sucked goat's milk, be the next whom he will."

All the standers-by were astonished to hear the goat, and the fat bee her rival, talk in this manner. But the queen instantly perceived that these must be two fairies, and this persuasion rendered her for some time uncertain how she ought to proceed. At length she declared in favour of the bee, for, being a little inclined to coveteousness, she reasoned in this manner : " If the bee keeps her word, the prince will yield such a profusion of sweets as will certainly save the expenses of a dessert." The she-goat seemed much displeased at being thus dismissed ; thrice she murmured out something which nobody could understand, and instantly a chariot superbly gilt and varnished, and drawn by eight phenixes, made its appearance. The black she-goat as instantly disappeared, and in her stead there was beheld sitting in the chariot a little old woman, who presently rose into the air, uttering loud menaces against the queen and the young prince. The chief physician was not at all satisfied with a choice so extraordinary as the queen had made, and therefore determined to propose it to the fair-bosomed brunetta, whether she would like to accept the office of being his housekeeper ; unfortunately, however, he applied too late, and was forced to take up with one among the other nineteen thousand nine



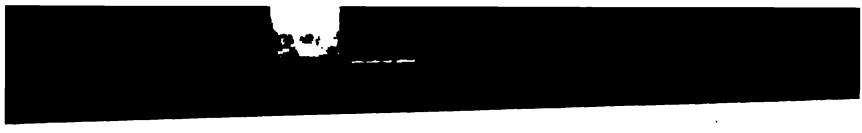
nundred and seventy-six young women, for the select twenty-four were all of them already engaged.

The black goat's menaces put the king into such a terror that he summoned his council of state that very evening, to deliberate upon what was to be done in so critical a circumstance; for it being his usual custom never to sleep without having fairy tales read to him, he very well knew that when fairies vented such threatenings, it was no laughing matter. These grave counsellors having accordingly assembled, after every one had given his sentiments on the subject, it appeared, that among six and thirty profound statesmen with large full-bottomed perukes, there were no less than six and thirty different opinions, of which each opinion was at least attended with as many difficulties. Thus they went on for some dozen sittings together, disputing with great spirit and sagacity, and in all probability the prince might has reached his age of manhood before they could have agreed what expedient it was best to adopt, had not his majesty's favourite jester struck out a proposal to send an embassy to Caramussal, the great magician who dwelt on the summit of Mount Atlas, and was consulted from all parts as an oracle of wisdom. The jester having the king's ear, and being moreover reputed to have the best head of the whole court, every one subscribed to his proposition. Accordingly, in a few days ambassadors were deputed, who, the better to mitigate their expenses, used such diligence, that within three months they arrived at the top of the mountain in question, though it was almost two hundred leagues distant from their capital.

They were immediately admitted to an audience of the great Caramussal, who, seated in a superb saloon upon a throne of ebony, had been employed the whole day in answering impertinent questions sent him from all quarters of the globe. The chief of the ambassadors, after having twisted his

moustachios and spit three times successively, opened in solemn order his capacious mouth, and was proceeding to repeat an excellent harangue which his secretary had composed for the purpose, when Caramussal interrupted him with the following address: "Mr Ambassador," said he, "I thank you for your speech, and from your physiognomy, I can readily conceive it to be a very fine one. I have so much to say myself all day long that little time is left me to listen to others. But over and beside all this, I already know beforehand what you mean to tell me. Inform the king your master that he has made himself a powerful enemy in the person of the fairy Caprosina; that it is not however impossible to avert the evils wherewith she hath menaced the prince, provided a necessary precaution be taken not to let him see a milkmaid until he is eighteen years of age. But since, notwithstanding every precaution in the world, it is very difficult, not to say impossible, to avoid his destiny, I am of opinion that, in order to arm him against all events, the prince should have the name of Biribinquer given him; a name, whose mystical virtues are alone sufficient to extricate him happily from every danger that might else befall him." Having vouchsafed them this solution, Caramussal dismissed the ambassadors, who at the end of three months more reached the capital of their country amidst the general acclamations of the people.

This answer of the great Caramussal seemed to the king so trifling that he had the greatest inclination in the world to take umbrage at it. "By my belly," cried he (for that was his usual oath), "I can't help thinking that the great Caramussal laughs at us—Biribinquer! what a confounded name! Who ever heard of a prince that bore such an appellation? I would fain know what secret virtue can lie concealed in a name so ridiculous at first sight? Nor, to say the truth, does the prohibition, to let him see no



milkmaid till he is eighteen, seem at all more consistent with reason or common-sense. Why so positively no milkmaid? How long have milkmaids been so much more dangerous than other wenches? Indeed, if he had said no dancing girl, or none of the queen's maids of honour, that might have been something; for (under secrecy be it said) I myself would not swear not to be sometimes tempted by such as these. However, since the great Caramussal will have it so, let the prince be immediately called Biribinquer. He will at least be the first of that name, and that is always enough to give us some little distinction in history. And as to the milkmaid, I will order such measures to be taken, that there shall neither be a cow, she-goat, nor milkmaid to be found within fifty leagues round my place of residence."

And now, without ever reflecting beforehand on the consequences that might follow from his resolutions, the king was just about to publish a royal edict upon the subject, when his parliament represented to him by a numerous deputation, how very hard, not to say tyrannical, it would be, should his majesty's faithful subjects be compelled from henceforward to drink no milk with their coffee; and the previous rumour of the purposed edict having moreover already caused a great tumult and uproar among the people, his majesty at length found himself obliged, after the example of many other kings in the fairy tales, to send away the prince royal to some great distance, under the care of his nurse the bee; and leave it to her discretion how best to preserve him from the snares of milkmaids, or the machinations of the fairy Caprosina.

In consequence of this determination, the bee conveyed her young charge into the midst of a large forest, which was at least two hundred leagues in circumference, and so totally uninhabited, that there was not even a mole to be found all through it. There, by her art, she constructed an immense

bee-hive of a reddish-coloured marble, and planted it round with an orange grove which extended above five and twenty leagues every way. A swarm of a hundred thousand bees, of whom she was queen, were set at work to make honey for the prince and for the use of the queen's seraglio; and that everything might conduce to the prince's perfect security, swarms of wasps were garrisoned round the forest at the distance of about five hundred paces from each other, with strict orders to guard the frontiers.

Meantime the prince grew up, and in beauty and rare qualities surpassed anything that had ever been seen before him. If he spit, it was nothing but syrup of roses; if he made water, it was the quintessence of orange flowers; and his humblest swaddling necessaries, blankets, and so forth, contained things so delicious, that they were sent from time to time to the queen, to complete her desserts on high days and holidays. The moment he began to lisp, the first things he uttered were all epigrams and ingenious conceits of fancy; and his wit became gradually so keen and exquisite, that not a bee amongst them could hold up his head against him, though the dullest in the whole hive had at least as much wit at will as any of the forty members in the French Academy.

At length, however, having attained his seventeenth year, he found a secret instinct springing within him which told him that he was not made to spend all his days in a bee-hive. Indeed, the fairy Melisotta, for that was his nurse's name, used her utmost endeavours to divert and amuse his mind. She procured for him a number of very ingenious cats, which used every evening to miaule him a French concerto or one of Lulli's operas; he had also a dog that was a rope-dancer, and some dozens of parrots and magpies, which had nothing else to do but to tell him stories and entertain him with their witty sallies. But all this was of little or no avail—



Biribinquer thought of nothing else night or day but how to procure his liberty. . The greatest difficulty he found in his way was those plaguy wasps that guarded the forest, who were in fact such a kind of pretty little animals as might have startled a very Hercules, for they were about the bulk of a young elephant, and their stings in shape and size were pretty nearly like those partisans or halberts, armed with which the ancient Helvetians maintained so successful a struggle in support of their endangered liberty. But one day, as Biribinquer lay reposing himself under a tree, with a heart full of despair at seeing himself thus kept a prisoner, a bee approached him, which, like all the rest of the male inhabitants of the fairy hive, was nearly the size of a half-grown bear.

" Prince Biribinquer," said the bee, " whether you may be tired or not, I assure you I am heartily so. The fairy Melisotta, our queen, has done me for some weeks past the honour of choosing me for her favourite; but I confess to you I sink under the burden of my employment. Between you and me she has above five thousand bees in her seraglio, who, trust me, are not suffered to lie idle. I should not wish to complain of being treated upon an equality with my other comrades; but, pox take it! the preference she bestows upon me begins to be rather inconvenient, and I declare to you I can hold it out no longer. Now, sir prince, if you chose it, nothing could be easier for you than to procure both your own liberty and mine too."

" But how so ? " demanded the prince.

" I have not always been a bee," replied the discontented favourite, " and it is solely in your power to restore me to my pristine shape. Only get upon my back; it grows late, and the queen is busied in her cell about matters which leave her no leisure to think of anything else; I will fly away with you: but you must first promise me that you will do what I require of you."

The prince gave him his promise, got upon his back without hesitation, and the bee took flight with him so rapidly, that in less than seven minutes they were out of the forest.

"Now," said the bee to him, "you are at liberty. The power of the old enchanter Padmanaba, who reduced me to this situation, does not allow me to accompany you farther; but mind what I am going to tell you. If you go on and keep to this road upon the left hand, you will at length come to a wide open plain where you will see a flock of blue goats feeding round about a little thatched cottage. Take good heed not to enter there, for if you do, you are undone. Mind and keep the left-hand road, and so get on till you arrive at an old ruinated place, whose magnificent remains will serve to show you what it has been heretofore. On going through a few courts you will come to a large staircase of white marble; that will lead you forward to a long gallery, in which you will find on each hand a number of magnificent and well-lighted apartments. Enter into none of these, for if you should, the door will instanly close upon you of itself, and then no power upon earth can extricate you. At length you will meet with one of the apartments shut, which will open of itself the moment you pronounce the name 'Biribinquer.' In this apartment you will pass the night—and this is all I require of you. A good journey to you, signior, and if you find my counsels good and useful to you, don't forget that one good turn deserves another."

At these words the bee took its flight, leaving the prince in the highest astonishment at all which it had told him. Full of impatience to see those marvellous adventures realised which he was encouraged to expect, he marched all night long, for it was now the middle of summer, and the moon shone clear. The next morning he perceived the predicted meadow, the thatched cottage, and the blue goats grazing round it. He well remembered the bee's express



prohibition respecting them; but at sight of the goats and cottage he felt a sort of attraction which it was impossible for him to account for or resist. Accordingly, he entered the cottage, and found nobody there but a young milkmaid in a jacket and petticoat as white as the driven snow. She was just going to milk some goats which were tied up to a crib set round with diamonds. The milk-pail she carried in her beautiful hand was made of a single ruby, and, instead of straw, the whole floor of the outhouse was strewed with jasmines and orange-flowers. All this indeed was enough to strike admiration: but the prince himself could scarce at all attend to it, having no eyes but for the beauty of the young girl. To say the truth, Venus, at that moment when she was carried by the zephyrs through the Paphian coasts, or young Hebe, while with half-tucked garment she poured forth nectar for the gods, was not more beautiful nor more charming than this milkmaid. Roses of the freshest hue sat mingled on her cheeks, while the rows of pearls, which she wore upon her arms and round her delicate feet, seemed only to augment her own dazzling whiteness: nothing could be more elegant than the features of her face, or more ravishing than her smiles. There was a peculiar expression of tenderness and innocence diffused over her whole form, and her slightest motion had a certain nameless grace which captivates all hearts at first sight. This charming young creature seemed agreeably surprised at this interview with Prince Biribinquer, and quite undetermined whether she ought to stay or fly; she stood still and contemplated him with an intermingled look of bashfulness, timidity, and pleasure; at length, just as the prince had thrown himself upon his knees before her, "Yes, yes," she exclaimed, "it is he, it is he!"

"How?" cried the prince in the height of transport, gathering from her words that she already

knew him and was not indifferent to his addresses; "and is then the too, too happy Biribinquer——"

"Ye gods!" cried the milkmaid, starting back all trembling and confounded, "what odious name is this I hear! How have my too credulous eyes and heart deceived me! Fly, fly, O unhappy Galactina!"

So saying she fled out of the hovel with a swiftness that outstripped the wind. The prince, quite stupefied, and unable to comprehend this aversion she had conceived against his name, ran after her as nimbly as possible, but the milkmaid seemed to fly in such a manner that her feet scarce touched the unbending grass. In vain did the beauties of which her flowing dress every moment discovered, add wings to the desires and feet of the pursuing prince. He presently lost sight of her in a thick wood, where he continued all day long his vague and rambling search, listening around him every step he went, and following every little noise that rustled among the leaves, but without being able to find the least trace of the desired object.

The sun was now set, and the prince at length found himself at the gate of an old half-ruinous mansion; on all sides from amidst clumps of shrubs, old fragments of marble, and broken pieces of columns of the finest adamant, reared their heads; so that every moment the prince stumbled against some ruin or other, the least of which was well worth an island of *terra firma*. From these circumstances he collected that he was now arrived at the palace which his friend the bee had told him of; flattering himself, as people in love and full of sanguine expectations commonly do), that in this mansion possibly he might again meet with his lovely milkmaid. With some pains and difficulty he made his way through two or three outward courts, and at last came to the staircase of white marble. It had at least sixty steps, and upon each step on both sides there stood



a winged lion, which, every time it breathed, cast out so much fire from its nostrils that it rendered the night brighter than noonday. So far, however, was the prince from being burned by it, that no sooner did the lions perceive him, than they stretched forth their wings and fled off with terrible roarings.

Prince Biribinquer then mounted the staircase, and soon came to a large gallery, wherein he found the several open rooms against which the bee had told him to be upon his guard. Each of these apartments led to two or three others, whose magnificence of arrangement and furniture surpassed everything that his imagination could conceive, although fairy matters were nothing new to him. For this once, nevertheless, he took good heed not to yield to the emotions of his curiosity, but still kept on his way, till he arrived at a door made of ebony, which was close shut to, and in the lock of which he perceived a golden key. All his efforts to turn this key were vain: but the moment he pronounced the name "Biribinquer," the door opened of its own accord, and he found himself in a grand saloon, the walls of which were covered over with looking-glass composed of crystal. A large chandelier of diamonds, consisting of above five hundred branches, and burning with oil of cinnamon, illuminated the room. In the middle of the saloon stood an ivory table of an oval form, and its feet were made of emeralds. Upon this table there lay two covers, and close by it stood two sideboards of azure full of plates and dishes of beaten gold, with goblets, cups, and other vessels and utensils of the same metal. After having considered for some time, and in great admiration everything that offered itself to his view in this saloon, he perceived a door, through which he entered into divers other apartments, each surpassing the other in magnificence. He stood a while contemplating every object distinctly, and knew not what to think of such a profusion of splendours. The avenues to

the mansion had promised him a ruinated building; the inside left him no room to doubt but that it must be inhabited, and yet he could neither see nor hear a living creature. He once more, therefore, ran through all these rooms, searched and ransacked every corner, and at last discovered in the last room of all, a little side-door made in the tapestry. He opened it, and presently found himself in a cabinet where even fairy skill seemed to have excelled itself. An agreeable mixture of light and shade illuminated the room, though there was no distinguishing from whence this magical twilight proceeded. The walls were of granite, black and polished; all like so many mirrors represented different scenes in the history of Venus and the beautiful Adonis, all wrought in so lively a manner that one would have supposed it to be nature itself, without a possibility of divining by what art these vivid portraits had incorporated themselves into the marble. Delicious odours, like those wafted to us by the zephyrs from fresh-blown parterres of flowers, filled all the apartment, yet whence they came could neither be discerned nor conceived; while a soft harmony, as of a concert heard at a great distance, resounded, as it were, insensibly through the enchanted ear, and melted the heart into a gentle languor. A superb and voluptuous couch, whose flowing curtains were half undrawn by a little god of love wrought in marble, that seemed, as it were, to breathe, was the only piece of furniture in this charming apartment. It excited in the heart of our prince a mysterious desire after certain objects, of which, novice as he yet was, he had only confused ideas, though the linings of the room, which he considered very attentively, and not without some gentle inquietude, gave him a degree of insight into the subject. At this juncture the image of the beautiful milkmaid presented itself before him with new vivacity, and raised in his bosom a sigh at seeing himself deprived



of the reality. This sacrifice offered to her charms, he again took a turn through the rooms to make a more accurate search about him, but with no better success than before. Tired at length, and unable to satisfy his curiosity, he retired to the cabinet, sat him down on the couch, undressed himself, and was just about to take his repose, when one of those indispensable necessities of human nature obliged him to look under the couch; there he found a crystal vase which still carried the marks of the use it had formerly been put to. The prince accordingly began to sprinkle it with orange-flower water, when—oh wonderful to relate! the crystal vase disappeared, and instead thereof he beheld a young nymph before him, so beautiful that it seemed impossible for her to have put the prince into such fear and trembling as in fact she did. She immediately smiled upon him, as if they had been already long acquainted; and before he could recover from his perturbation, said to him "Welcome, Prince Biribinquer! Do not regret the having done a kindness to a young fairy, whom a jealous barbarian has so grossly abused as to have made her serve, for two long centuries, as an instrument to the meanest uses. Tell me sincerely, prince, do not you think me designed by nature for infinitely nobler purposes?"

Saying this, she fixed her eyes upon him with such a look, that it fell in a direct line immediately upon the discreet Biribinquer, and put him into no small confusion. Biribinquer, as we have before observed, possessed as much wit and understanding as any one; but withal, we must add as much heedlessness and inattention. He found it necessary to say something civil to the fairy, but being used to give everything he said a singular turn, all his wit could not prevent him, this once, from uttering a very silly speech.

"'Tis very fortunate for you, beautiful nymph,"

said he, "since I could have no intention to render you this singular piece of service; 'twas very ignorantly done on my part, believe me; for be assured I am too well acquainted with what decency and good breeding require to——"

"Oh, not so much formality, I beseech you," replied the fairy, "'tis quite out of season, under the circumstances with which we have so lately commenced our acquaintance. The least I owe you in return is myself; and as we have only this night to be together, I should have reason to reproach myself, were I to occasion you to lose your time in ceremonies. I know you want repose; you are already undressed; get into bed then; there is only this one indeed in the room, but there is a sofa in the great saloon, upon which I can pass the night very quietly."

"Madam," said the prince, hardly knowing what he was going to utter, "I should be—at this instant—the happiest of mortals, if I—was not the most unhappy. I must confess I have found what I did not look for, in looking for what I had lost; and if the pain of having found you, could equal the joy of what I have lost—— No, no, I would say, if the joy of having found you, could but——"

"O' my conscience," interrupted the fairy, "I believe you are raving! What is it you mean by all this string of incoherencies? Come, come, Prince Biribinquer, confess to me in plain prose that you are in love with a milkmaid."

"You guess so exactly," replied the prince, "that I must confess the truth."

"Oh, pray, don't let that give you any uneasiness," continued the fairy. "You are enamoured of a young milkmaid whom you met with this morning in a little thatched house, or more properly speaking, in a hovel."

"But now, I beg of you, from whence is it—how could you possibly——"



"And who was just then going to milk a blue goat that was foddered with orange-flowers, and the pail she received the milk in was all studded with rubies. Is it not so?"

"Surely," exclaimed the prince, "for a person, who not a quarter of an hour ago, pardon me, was but a—I will not say what—why, you know a great deal. Sure, 'tis a most surprising——"

"And the lady fled away the moment she heard the name of Biribinquer——"

"But I beg of you, madam, from whence could you learn all this? being, as you said, for above two hundred years kept in that singular state in which I had so very unexpectedly the honour to become acquainted with you."

"Not so unexpectedly on my part, as you may imagine," replied the fairy; "but defer your curiosity for a few moments. You are fatigued, and have eaten nothing all day; follow me into the saloon; my people are already preparing for us, and I hope your fidelity to the fair milkmaid will at least permit you to partake of the repast with me."

Biribinquer sensibly felt the secret reproach couched in this brief remonstrance, but waived taking further notice of it at present, contenting himself with slipping on his clothes, making the lady a profound obeisance, and following her into the saloon.

As soon as they had entered the saloon the beautiful Crystallina, (for that was the fairy's name), went up to the chimney-place and took out a little ebony wand, at each end of which hung a talisman composed of diamonds.

"Now," said the fairy, "I have nothing more to fear. Sit you down, Prince Biribinquer; I am now the mistress of this palace, and of forty thousand elementary spirits, whom the great enchanter who constructed the edifice five hundred years ago destined to wait upon me on all occasions."

So saying, she struck thrice upon the table, and in

as many seconds of time, to his great astonishment, Biribinquer beheld the table covered with dishes of the most delicious kinds, and the sideboards as it were spontaneously loaded with full goblets of wine.

"I know, prince," said the fairy, "that you eat nothing but honey. Taste this, if you please, and tell me if you ever ate any like it."

The prince ate of it, and solemnly protested it could be nothing else but the ambrosia of the gods.

"'Tis prepared," said she, "from the purest exhalations of flowers which never fade, and which blow in the gardens of the sylphs. But what say you to this wine," continued she, offering him a sparkling cup.

"I swear to you," cried the prince, all transported, "that the bright Ariadne never poured forth better for young Bacchus."

"'Tis pressed," replied she, "from grapes that grow in the sylphian vineyards, and those beautiful spirits owe all their youth and that immortal gaiety which flows through their veins to the constant use of this grateful fluid."

The fairy concealed one of the qualities of this nectar, but the prince soon became sensible of its efficacy. The more he drank of it, the more charming he found his fair companion. At the first glance he perceived she had a beautiful flaxen head of hair; the next struck him with the exquisite delicacy of her arm; the third discovered to him a dimple in her left cheek; and on a fourth survey he was enchanted with the whiteness and elegant periphery of a neck and bosom, which, though a little shaded by the intervention of a thin gauze, made a powerful attack upon his eyes. An object so engaging, with a goblet that replenished itself as fast as it was exhausted, were more than sufficient to bury his senses in a soft oblivion of all the milkmaids in the universe. What shall we say? Biribinquer was too polite to let so beautiful a fairy sleep alone upon



the sofa; and the beautiful fairy had too much gratitude to refuse him her company in a house where forty thousand spirits walked day and night. In a word, the politeness of the one, and the gratitude of the other, were carried as far as possible, and Biribinquer showed himself perfectly worthy of the good opinion which Crystallina had conceived of him from the first moment she saw him.

The fairy, says our history, waked first in the morning, and could not support the indecorum of seeing so extraordinary a prince lie sleeping in such good company.

"Prince Biribinquer," said she, after having waked him, nobody knows how, "I am under many obligations to you. You have delivered me from an enchantment of the utmost indignity that ever female suffered; you have avenged me of my jealous foe; and now there is only one thing left to do, after which you may depend upon the most perfect gratitude in the power of the fairy Crystallina."

"And what then remains to be done?" demanded the prince, rubbing his eyes and yawning.

"Hear me," replied the fairy. "This palace, as I before informed you, originally belonged to an enchanter, whose science gave him an almost unlimited power over all the elements; but his power over hearts was limited on the contrary in an equal proportion. Unfortunately for him, in spite of his great age, and his white beard, which hung down to his girdle, he had one of the most amorous constitutions that ever existed. He fell in love with me, and though he had not the gift of making himself loved, he had sufficient power, however, to make himself feared. Do but think of the whimsicalness of fate! I refused him my heart, which he strove to gain, and I yielded to him my person, which to him could be of no possible use or avail. At length, out of mere vexation, he became jealous; so jealous, I assure you, that it was insupportable. He had sylphs at his

command of exceeding beauty; but at the same time he was kind enough to insist upon it I should neither look at these sylphs nor take any little innocent freedoms with them. If he ever found one of them in my chamber or upon my sofa, I was sure never to see the sylph again. I desired him to place some confidence in my virtue; but that did not seem to this infidel a sufficient security against a destiny which he was conscious he had but too well deserved. In short, he despatched all the sylphs, and took into his service none but gnomes, little deformed dwarfs, the sight of whom alone was enough to throw one into a swoon. However, as custom at length makes all things tolerable, this same custom reconciled me by degrees to the figure of these gnomes, insomuch, that in time I found that droll and comical, which at first had appeared to me hideous. There was not an individual among them but was a perfect caricature. One was dignified with a camel's bunch, another had a nose that hung down below his chin; a third had satyr's ears, and a mouth which cleft his head into two hemispheres; a fourth had an enormous prominent belly. In a word, a Chinese imagination could have invented nothing more extravagant than the visages and shapes of these dwarfs.

"Old Padmanaba, however, did not perceive that among his domestics there was one, who, in a certain sense, was more dangerous than the handsomest sylph in the world; not that he was less ugly than the rest, but through a very singular frolic of nature, that in him seemed a merit which in the others served only to offend the sight. I don't know whether you comprehend me, Prince Biribinquer?"

"Not entirely," replied the prince. "But, pray, be kind enough to proceed; perhaps you will be more intelligible as you go on."

"In a little while," continued the beautiful Crystallina, "Grigi, for so the gnome was called, had reason to believe that he was less disagreeable



to me than his companions. What shall we say for it? People have strange ideas when they are teased and harassed, and Grigi had a singular talent at amusing discontented ladies. In short, he so well knew how to fill up my leisure hours—and many such I had that hung upon my hands—that no creature upon earth could be more satisfied than I was with him. Padmanaba at length perceived the extraordinary cheerfulness that shone in my face and animated my whole frame, but he could not so soon discover the true source of it, and the idea of its proceeding merely from the pleasure of *his* society was too ridiculous for any but himself to conceive. But unfortunately, he was a great master in the art of forming those arguments which are termed Sorites; * at last, therefore, by a series of syllogisms, he hit upon a supposition which seemed to him to develop the whole mystery. He accordingly resolved to observe us, and chose his time so well for the purpose, that in this very cabinet he surprised us at our amusements, which little Grigi's cleverness very well knew how to render extremely interesting. Could you think it possible, my prince, for any one to have a heart so maliciously wicked as the old enchanter exhibited upon this occasion? Instead of generously taking part in my pleasures, he grew enraged at them; pitiful wretch that he was! nobody hindered his being in a pet with himself for not being Grigi; but was ever anything more unjust than to punish us both for that reason?"

"No, truly," cried Biribinquer, "nothing could be more so. For he had nothing more to do than to be Grigi in one single respect, and I am sure, in spite

* A vague, imperfect kind of syllogism, consisting of several unconnected propositions heaped together, in which the last predicate or property is attributed to the first subject. Such was the merry argument urged by Themistocles, to prove that his little son, under ten years of age, governed the whole world. "My son governs his mother, his mother me; I the Athenians; the Athenians the rest of Greece; Greece commands Europe; Europe the whole world. Therefore my son governs the whole world."

of his long white beard, you must have given him the preference to an ill-looking little dwarf."

"Why do you tell me of an ill-looking dwarf?" interrupted Crystallina. "I assure you at the juncture we are speaking of Grigi was an Adonis in my eyes. But have patience and you shall know the result. After the old creature had been for some time an invisible spectator of what passed, he at length appeared to us, and put us into a terror more easily to be imagined than described. He immediately vented against us all the rage which a scene like this, that seemed a reproach upon him for his impotence, naturally tended to produce. I am ashamed to repeat before you the compliments he made me upon the occasion. In fine, for time is precious, he changed me—you well know how—and turned poor Grigi into a bee."

"Into a bee!" exclaimed Biribinquer: "well, that is very singular. Why, at this rate, Signior Grigi may possibly be one of my acquaintance——"

"Upon this condition," continued Crystallina, "that I should not recover my former shape, till after having served the Prince Biribinquer—pardon my bashfulness, if I do not mention the circumstance under which I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with you; and in which, indeed, not to flatter you, you appeared to such advantage, that in my first confusion, I was just ready to take you for poor Grigi himself."

"Oh, madam, you do me too much honour," replied Biribinquer, "and had I but known that your heart was already captivated by so worthy an object——"

"I beseech you," said the fairy, "throw aside that awkward custom of making so much ceremony, and so very ill-timed into the bargain. You cannot conceive what a silly air it gives you. I tell you I have the best opinion that can be of your discretion; and, I hope, have given you a pretty convincing proof of



it, by thinking myself perfectly safe in being so intimate with you. I don't very well remember, indeed, how it happened that we should be so familiar, for I confess to you, the pleasure of an interview so long desired made me drink a few glasses more than I usually do. But I flatter myself you will not have exceeded the bounds——"

"In truth, beautiful Crystallina," interrupted the prince, "I find your memory is as extraordinary as the virtue upon which you required old Padmanaba to repose his confidence: but, tell me now, whether you have not forgot what became of the bee?"

"Ay, indeed, that's well remembered," replied the fairy; "poor Grigi! I had really forgot him; I was very sorry for his fate. But the cruel Padmanaba set his deliverance at so impertinent a price, that I know not how I shall be able to tell you——"

"But what was the price then?" demanded Biribinquer.

"I cannot comprehend," replied Crystallina, "what you can have done to this old enchanter, or why he should bring you in for a share in all his devilish tricks; for it is certain, your great grandfather himself was not born when these transactions happened. In short, Grigi can never be restored to his pristine shape till you have—— But no; the delicacy of my sentiments does not permit to tell it you; nor can I conceive how I shall be able to suggest it. I hope, however, you may already have formed an idea of what it is; for my own part, I cannot explain myself more clearly to you; indeed, I should die with shame to think of it——"

"May I be instantly turned into a bee thrice over," exclaimed Biribinquer, "if I can possibly guess what you would be at. Don't make so many preambles, I beg of you; the day draws on apace, and I cannot stay——"

"How!" said the fairy, "does the time you are spending with me seem so long?—and cannot I make

you forget a milk-girl even for a few hours? Your interest, at least, requires you should pay some little court to me; for know, it is in my power to contribute much more to your happiness than you are aware of."

"Tell me quickly, then," replied Biribinquer, "what I am to do."

"How vastly impatient you are!" cried the fairy. "Know then, that poor Grigi, till Prince Biribinquer shall have—well, now, cannot you guess? But of this I can certainly assure you, that nothing but a concern for the deliverance of an old friend could make me resolve to become the sacrifice of that vengeance, which by your interposition Padmanaba is determined to take upon poor Grigi."

"Why, he would not wish me to take away your life, I hope?" replied the prince.

"Indeed and indeed," said Crystallina, "you are very dull of conception to-day. Don't you think, then, that a lover, really captivated by his mistress, would sooner choose to die than see her in the arms of another."

"Oho! now I comprehend you at last, madam," said Biribinquer, with an air of cool reserve. "Upon my word, your modesty need not have made so many scruples against speaking the business out boldly. But, give me leave, if you please, to help your memory a little, and just to remind you, that if the matter only rested here, Grigi must have been disenchanted a long while ago. You must certainly recollect that it is not three hours ago since——"

"I verily think your brain is turned," interrupted the fairy. "Why, then, you must know that Padmanaba is extremely rigid in his adherence to the law of retaliation, and that of consequence Grigi never will recover his former shape, till you have retaliated upon him all those offences, which the enchanter imagines himself to have received from him."

"Oh, madam," cried Prince Biribinquer, leaping



out of bed, " I am Signior Padmanaba's very humble servant. But since nothing more than this trifling circumstance is requisite, you have only to look out among the ten thousand gnomes retained in your service, for a new Grigi to avenge your old grey-headed fool upon his wonderful rival; and probably this may be of more importance than to restore your old acquaintance, the little dwarf, to his original beauty. For my own part, I imagine you have reason to be satisfied with my having restored you to your pristine form. I don't mention this as if I thought myself not amply recompensed for a piece of service which has cost me so little, by the singular civilities you have bestowed upon me. I only mean to remind you of the main point which must ever claim your consideration; namely, that instead of being a crystal vase of low degree, you are now again become the fairy Crystallina, and that the power with which old Padmanaba's wand invests you, ought very amply and easily to console you for the loss of a single individual."

" I hope, however," replied Crystallina, " that you will not attribute my solicitude for poor Grigi to interested views. You must be greatly mistaken indeed, as to the delicacy of my sentiments, as well as the duties of friendship, if you cannot allow that a person may express zeal for a friend without having any other motive than that friend's welfare; and I should be sorry——"

" Oh, madam," replied Biribinquer, who had been dressing himself all this while, " I am perfectly well persuaded of that quintessence of delicacy which pervades your sentiments: but you see how fine a morning it is for the continuation of my journey. Be so kind then, you, whose heart is capable of so disinterested a friendship, as to inform me which road I shall take to find my beloved Galactina again. Do this, and I will then maintain against all and every gainsayer upon earth, that you are at once the

most generous, the most disinterested, and even, if you please, the coyest, chastest fairy, of all that inhabit the universal globe."

"You shall be satisfied," said Crystallina. "Go seek your milkmaid, since your destiny will have it so. I might find reasons not to be entirely pleased with your deportment; but I see you are one of those that must not be scrutinised too closely. Go, prince, in the courtyard you will find a mule which will never slacken its pace till it has brought you to your Galactina; and, should any mischance unexpectedly befall you, in these pea-shells you will find a universal and an infallible remedy."

"Well!" said Don Eugenio, interrupting his friend's narration, "how glad am I that you have brought your Biribinquer at last out of that cursed palace. I protest to you I am above half-tired of this Crystallina. What an insipid creature!"

"You need only say she is a fairy," replied Don Gabriel, "and then you have said everything."

"You certainly don't mean by that, to make us understand that there are no worthy and respectable fairies," said Don Sylvio, with a very serious countenance; "for it is evident beyond a doubt that there are such. It cannot however be denied, that there is a something very singular and absurd, which distinguishes them from mortals, at least it appears so to us; but it may be we are not competent judges respecting them, and may err in judging of them by rules to which beings of a different class from our own are by no means confined."

"But what say you to her pompous pretensions, and the virtue she so much boasts of?"

"This sitting in judgment upon fairies," replied Don Sylvio, "is a string so difficult to touch, that I should rather choose to say nothing at all concerning it, and especially on the present occasion; the history



of Prince Biribinquer being in all respects the most extraordinary tale that I ever yet heard of."

"As to the fairy Crystallina's character," said Don Gabriel, "the historian only gives it just as it really was; and, without violating that veneration which is so justly due to the fairies, I apprehend we may freely pronounce that character blamable: and as to the rest, you will grant me, Don Eugenio, that were you to put yourself in the prince's place, the fairy's vaunting and parade might not seem near so tiresome to you, as it may possibly have appeared from hearing me repeat it. We are always fond of hearing a fair female speak, especially if we can see her at the same time, and she has an agreeable tone of voice. Then you are at once persuaded and affected without paying any minute attention to what she says; and if you did, generally speaking, perhaps you might not be much the gainer by so doing."

"Oh, prithee now, if you have nothing more civil to say of our sex," said Donna Felicia, "you had better go on with your history, however tiresome it may be, or seem to be."

Don Gabriel promised his best endeavours to render it more amusing, and continued as follows:—

"Prince Biribinquer put the pea-shells into his pocket, thanked the fairy Crystallina for all her civilities, and accompanied her down to the courtyard.

"'There now,' said she, 'observe that mule, there is not perhaps her equal. She is descended in a right line from the famous Trojan horse, and the ass of old Silenus. On the paternal side she has the quality of being wood, and stands in no need either of provender, litter, or the curry-comb; on the mother's side she derives the advantage of travelling very commodiously, and is as mild and gentle as a lamb. Mount her, and let her go with you wherever she will, she will carry you to your milkmaid, and if you are not as happy at the long run as you desire to be, the fault will be entirely your own.'

"The prince examined this extraordinary beast on all sides, and it required all the wondrous things he had seen in the mansion to make him put as much confidence in the animal as the fairy would have him. However, while he was mounting, Crystallina determined to give him a convincing proof that she had advanced nothing too much respecting her own power. She cleft the air thrice with her ebon staff, and in a moment, behold all the ten thousand sylphs, whom Padmanaba's wand had now subjected to her authority, made their appearance! The court, the staircase, the gallery, the roofs, and the very air itself, all swarmed with winged youths, every one of whom surpassed the Vatican Apollo. 'Oh! by all the fairies,' exclaimed Biribinquer, in an ecstasy at the sight, 'what a brilliant court is this of yours, madam! Leave little Grigri in his bee-state as long as he pleases, here's sufficient to make you amends for his absence. 'Twould be a bad affair indeed, if among all these deities of love none could be found capable of filling up the place of a gnome, who, by your own account, had no other preference over his other deformed companions, but that of being monstrous in a more agreeable manner than the rest.'

"'You see, at least,' replied Crystallina, 'that I am in no want of company to console me for your infidelity, in case I should ever wish for that consolation.'

"Having said this, she wished him a good journey, and Biribinquer trotted away upon his wooden mule with all expedition, and full of reflection on the many wonderful events that had befallen him in the fairy's palace."

CHAPTER II

CONTINUATION OF PRINCE BIRIBINQUER'S HISTORY

"I SHALL waive giving you the various private reflections which occurred to Biribinquer, and proceed to inform you that about noon, when the heat began to be insupportable, he alighted at the entrance of a forest, and sat himself down upon the bank of a rivulet which ran down under the shadow of some thick spreading trees. Soon after he perceived a shepherdess driving a little herd of pink-coloured goats before to water in the rivulet, just by the spot where Biribinquer was laid down in the shade.

"Imagine to yourself, Don Sylvio, how great must be his rapture, on recollecting in this young shepherdess his well beloved milkmaid. She now appeared to him a hundred times more lovely than when he first beheld her: but what rejoiced him most was, that instead of flying from him, she approached nearer and nearer to him. At length she seated herself upon the grass close beside him, seemingly as if she had taken no notice of his being there. The prince had not courage to speak to her, but threw at her such ardent glances as might almost have vitrified the flint stones at the bottom of the stream before him. The fair shepherdess, who must have been of a very cold constitution not to have been broiled by such powerful glances, was tying up, in the most composed manner imaginable, a garland of flowers, but could not help every now and then giving him a sidelong look, as it were by stealth. The prince thought there seemed to be

no indignation in her countenance; and this rendered him so bold that he stole nearer to her unperceived, just as she was caressing a little she-goat, which instead of hair wore nothing but fine silver threads, and was all over bedecked with garlands and rose-coloured ribands. Biribinquer's looks glancing from this new-fixed point, said full as many clever things now as they had done before; while hers corresponded with them from time to time so politely that at length he could not help throwing himself at her feet, and, according to his custom, repeating to her in very poetical figures, what he had before told her in language much more intelligible and persuasive. Having finished his tender elegy, the beautiful shepherdess answered him with a look, the beginning of which was more cool than the close of it.

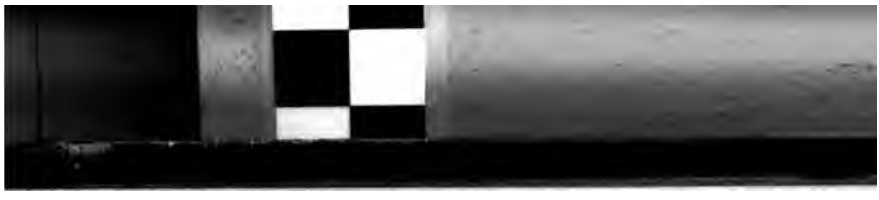
" ' I know not ' said she, ' whether I have perfectly understood you: but did not you mean to tell me all this while, that you love me ? '

" ' That I love you ! ' cried Biribinquer, all transported, ' Heavens ! say rather that I adore you, and could wish to yield up my soul thus languishing at your feet.'

" ' Well, lookye,' replied the shepherdess, ' I am but a very simple girl: I neither wish you to adore me, nor that you should yield up your soul, for I do not imagine you to have too much of it. I shall be satisfied if you do but love me. But I must tell you, it will be a more difficult matter to persuade me, than the fairy with whom you spent the evening yesterday.'

" ' Gods ! ' exclaimed the prince, in the deepest confusion, ' what's this I hear ! How is it possible —who can have given you—from whence could you learn—I know not what I say—oh ! wretched Biribinquer ! '

" Scarce had he uttered this fatal name, when the beautiful shepherdess set up a loud shriek.



"'Yes, wretched Biribinquer, indeed,' she cried, starting up with great precipitation, 'and must you again offend my ears with that detestable, unworthy name? You force me at once to hate and to fly from you, just when I——'

"Here the enraged Galactina was suddenly interrupted by a spectacle which equally prevented her and the prince from thinking of anything else but the object before their eyes. Advancing towards them they beheld a giant, whose forehead was encircled with a couple of young oaks twisted together instead of a diadem. The monster stalked forward, picking his teeth with a large pointed stake, and coming up to the shepherdess, spoke to her in so terrible and thundering a voice, that upwards of two hundred crows which had built their nests in his huge bushy beard, issued forth on all sides in the greatest hurry and confusion.

"'What art thou about there, girl?' he cried. 'What be'st doing with that little dwarf? Follow me this instant, or I will hack thee as small as mince-meat. And as for thee,' said he, turning to the prince, and pushing him to a large sack which he had brought upon his shoulders, 'get thee into my bag here; get thee in, I tell thee.' After which very laconic compliment, he tied up the sack, took the shepherdess in his arm, and walked away.

"Poor Biribinquer fancied himself plunged into an unfathomable world, and for a good while kept tumbling from side to side without being able to reach the bottom; at length, however, he stopped there, but so hurt with a blow on the head by falling against a knot which stood out on the sack's seam, that for some minutes he lay quite stunned, and imagined he had broken his skull. But coming to himself by degrees, he luckily recollected the pea-shells which Crystallina had given him: accordingly, he broke them open, but found nothing there but a little diamond knife, with a haft made out of a griffin's

claw, and so small that he could hardly hold it in his three fingers.

"'And is this all that the fairy Crystallina has done for me?' said he to himself. 'What would she have me do with this trifling toy? 'tis hardly big enough to cut my throat with, if I wished to do it; and possibly that might be her view in bestowing the gift upon me. But no, everything must be tried before throat-cutting. Who knows but I may make a hole in the sack with this idea of a knife, though it will cost me no little pains to manage it, and I may be obliged to hazard a dangerous leap into the bargain. But I had rather run any hazard than risk this cursed monster's making sausages of my body to feed his brats with.'

"Full of this noble ardour, Biribinquer, or rather the little knife, upon which a talisman was engraven, went to work so effectually, that in a little while it made a pretty moderate hole in the sack, though the threads of which it was composed were as thick as a cable. He presently observed that they were going through a forest, and was in great hopes of suiting matters so, as that in jumping through the orifice of the sack, he might somehow catch hold of one of the tallest trees. This scheme was immediately put in execution without the giant's perceiving anything of it; but the branch he wanted to hold by broke, and poor Biribinquer tumbled headlong in a marble basin very deep and full of water, that lay luckily beneath the tree; for what he had taken for a forest, proved to be a very fine park belonging to an adjacent noble mansion. He thought himself at least fallen into the Caspian Gulf, or more properly speaking, he could think of nothing at all; the fright he was in having so stunned his brain that he lay motionless awhile, and probably might never have seen the continent again, had not a nymph who luckily happened to be bathing herself in the basin that instant come to his assistance. The danger in



which she beheld so handsome a young man, made her forget her own present condition ; and indeed the young man might have been drowned out and out, before she could have dressed her fair frame. Biribinquer, on recovering his spirits, found his face lying against one of the most beautiful bosoms that ever stood exposed to view, and the moment he opened his eyes, saw himself stretched out on the verge of an extensive piece of water in the arms of a nymph, who, in the negligent deshabille under which he beheld her, restored him almost instantaneously to an equal, if not greater degree of vivacity, than he had ever enjoyed before.

" This adventure put him into so agreeable a surprise, that it hindered him from uttering a single word. But no sooner did the nymph perceive him beginning to revive, than she disengaged herself from him, and leaped into the water. Biribinquer, who imagined she was about to fly, instantly began to lament in a plaintive voice, like a young child when his favourite doll is attempted to be torn from him. The beautiful nymph, it seems, was in reality very far from harbouring so cruel a design ; for in a few minutes he saw her back reappear upon the surface, surpassing the lily in whiteness. She lifted up her head a little, but the moment she perceived the prince, plunged again into the water and swam under the wave till she got to the opposite side where her garments lay. But, observing the prince was coming round towards her, she raised herself to the waist above the water, encircled with her long fair tresses, which partly hung floating round her on the stream, and partly descended to her feet, concealing from the prince's view beauties which might have restored a Tithonus to fresh youth and vigour.

" ' 'Tis very indiscreet in you, Prince Biribinquer,' said she, ' to embarrass people by your presence at a time when they would choose to be alone.'

"'Pardon me, beauteous nymph,' replied the prince, 'if I conceive your scruples to be a little out of season. After the service you have so generously rendered me, I should apprehend——'

"'Why, look now, what insolent creatures are these men! There is no showing them the least civility, but they will instantly criticise and find fault; and what is merely the effect of generosity or pity, is, in their fancy, a sufficient authority to take freedoms. What! because I have been kind enough to save your life, I suppose now you think——'

"'Oh, how cruel you are!' interrupted the prince, 'to attribute that to insolence, which is really nothing but the effect of that enchantment necessarily communicated by a sight of your charms. If you wish to take from me the life which you have so lately saved, (for who could behold you, and at the same time endure the deprivation of a sight so ravishing!) kill me at least in a generous manner; let me stand a monument of your triumphant beauty, and while I thus contemplate you, convert me, if you please, into a lifeless form of marble.'

"'You have read the poets, I see,' said the nymph, 'and pretty attentively too; prithee, whence did you take that allusion? Was not there once upon a time a certain Medusa—O' my conscience, you have thumbed your Ovid to some purpose, and it must be owned you have done credit to your schoolmaster.'

"'Cruel!' exclaimed Biribinquer, with great impatience, 'what pleasure can you find in confounding the language of my heart, which can meet with no other expressions strong enough to describe what it feels; to confound, I say, this language with the rhetorical figures and flourishes of a young schoolboy?'

"'You time it very ill for disputing,' interrupted the nymph; 'don't you see then, that in the element where I am, I have greatly the advantage over you?



But I prithee now, just step behind those myrtle hedges, and give me leave, if you please, to slip on my clothes.'

"'But would it not be more agreeable to you, if I might be permitted to help dress you?'

"'What an idea!' replied the nymph. 'I am extremely obliged to you for your politeness, but I should not choose to put you to so much trouble; besides, as you may soon see, I am in no want of people more capable, and better adapted to the business than you are.'

"So saying, she sounded a little conch which hung about her neck, fastened to a collar of the largest and finest pearls. In an instant the whole basin was filled with young nymphs, who sprang from the water and formed a circle round their mistress. At such a sight, Biribinquer could still less find it in his heart to retire; but no sooner did the nymphs perceive this, than they dashed in his face so large a quantity of water, that out of fear of becoming another Acteon, he fled away as rapidly as if he had already the feet of a stag. Every moment he kept feeling his forehead, but finding no horns sprouted there, and hence recovering spirits, he slipped behind the myrtle-hedges in order to contemplate his beautiful nymph while she was dressing. But now it was too late. The attendant nymphs were all disappeared, and on his advancing from behind the hedges, he was within an ace of hitting his head against that of his fair deliverer, who was come thither in search of him. Full of astonishment to behold her thus instantaneously as it were, 'How, madam,' he cried, 'do you call this dressing yourself?'

"'Why not?' replied the nymph. 'Don't you see I am wrapped round with seven veils, one over the other?'

"'Odso! madam, I see,' said the prince; 'but if this be drapery, I should be mighty curious to know

the person that wove it. Why, the finest cobweb is mere packing-cloth in comparison to this. I could have sworn it was nothing but the pure air.'

"'It is made of the finest sort of fluid,' replied she; 'a species of water without moisture; spun, or rather wire-drawn by the polypuses, and woven by our young girls. 'Tis the common wear of us undinæ, and what other could you wish us to have? For we are in no need of anything to defend us either from heat or cold——'

"'Heaven forbid that I should wish you any other,' said Biribinquer; 'but don't take it amiss, if I protest to you, that in my mind you might very well have excused putting yourself to so much trouble and punctilio, when you wanted to come out of the basin.'

"'Hear me, Monsieur Honey,' said the nymph, with one of the most gracious, half-sneering, half-smiling looks in the world, 'if I was to give you any counsel, it should be to get rid of that ill habit you have acquired of continually attempting to moralise; for to tell you the truth, you have no skill at it, and it sits but very awkwardly upon you; not to say that it's a custom which flies directly in the face of what we call good breeding. 'Tis very easy to discern you have seen nothing of the world, unless it were through the chinks of a bee-hive, and therefore it would be highly proper in you to follow the sage Avicenna's advice, and never to judge of anything at first sight. But let us call another subject. You have not yet dined, I apprehend, and however enamoured you may be of your milkmaid, under certain limitations, yet I know you are not used to live upon sighs.'

"This said, she sounded her conch again, and instantly three nymphs issued from the basin. The first brought a little table made of amber, and supported by three Graces cut out of one single amethyst. The second covered this table with a mat of the



finest chipped rushes. The third brought upon her head a basket, from whence she took out several covered shells, and set them on the table.

"'I am told,' said the nymph to Prince Biribinquer, 'that you eat nothing but honey. I can give you a taste of some that is not of the worst sort, though it's extracted entirely from sea-plants.'

"The prince accordingly tasted, and found it so good that he could have almost devoured the very shell in which it was served up. After the repast two other naiads appeared, bearing a little sideboard of sapphire, garnished with drinking vessels. They were all made out of compacted water, hard as adamant, transparent as crystal; and, as it seemed to the prince, were full of clear fountain water. But the moment it touched Biribinquer's lips, he found that the best wines of Persia were but phlegm in comparison with what he tasted.

"'Now,' said the undina, 'you will allow yourself to be not much worse off here than at the fairy Crystallina's, with whom you spent last night in so sociable a *tête-à-tête*.'

"'Beautiful undina,' replied the prince, 'you are too modest thus to think of comparing yourself with a fairy, who is in every respect so greatly your inferior.'

"'Why, there now, this is bad reasoning again,' said the nymph: 'I did not say it out of modesty, but merely to know what you would say to me in reply.'

"'But tell me then, my goddess,' said the prince, 'how could you come by all this good news respecting me? The moment you saw me, you called me by my name——'

"'By which,' replied the nymph, 'you may discern that I am as good a connoisseur as the fairy Crystallina herself.'

"'And you likewise know that I was brought up in a bee-hive.'

"'That is easily seen with half an eye,' said the nymph.

" ' And that I am in love with a milkmaid.'

" ' Oh yes, and as deeply as ever being was ; nay, you are more so still since she became a shepherdess ; and who knows how far you might have pursued your fortune, had not the giant Caraculiamborix—— But you need give yourself no trouble about that matter. You shall see her again, and be as happy too as ever creature can be in the possession of a shepherdess or milkmaid.'

" ' Oh,' cried Biribinquer, who now began powerfully to experience the effects of that liquor with which the undina had been treating him, ' who can wish to see or possess any other object, after having once beheld you, divine undina ! In truth, I scarce even remember to have had eyes hitherto. The first moment in which I looked at you was the commencement of my existence : and I neither know nor desire any other felicity, than to be consumed at your feet by that ardent flame which your first glances enkindled in my heart.'

" ' Prince Biribinquer,' said the undina, ' you have had but a poor master in rhetoric. I should have thought the fairy Crystallina might have cured you of the ridiculous opinion, that to evidence the force of one's passion, one must be absolutely obliged to talk in an extravagant style. I would venture to lay any wager you will, that you do not talk seriously when you tell me you wish to be consumed at my feet. Believe me, I know your desires much better, and you would gain more by talking to me in the natural way. This stiff bombast language to which you have accustomed yourself, may be of the right stamp possibly to touch the heart of a milkmaid : but let me tell you once for all you must not treat every one you meet in the same way. A female, who like me has studied her Averroës,* does not suffer herself to

* One of the most subtle philosophers among the Arabians in the 12th century; and a man of very doubtful character, in point of religion and morals.



be caught by poetical flourishes. You must know how to convince us, if you would make us feel ; and it is the force of truth alone which can bring us to a voluntary self-surrender.'

" Biribinquer was too well inured to the reprimands of those ladies into whose hands he fell, to lose courage on receiving such a reproach, as at the same time pointed out to him by what means he might hope to make his party good among the female disciples of Averroës. In fact, he discerned that he should have much less difficulty to subdue the fair nymph by the energy of truth, than by artificial and high-flown declarations of love. The charms of the undinæ, according to the authentic testimony of the Count de Gabalis, exceed everything that can be desired in the possession of the fairest among mortal beauties. In a word, to the wishes of this bright undina Biribinquer by degrees became more natural and more convincing ; and though the lady herself very exactly observed what we call the gradations, she knew so well how to regulate her time, that just as the sable veil of night involved the hemisphere— just then had our prince carried conviction to that point of evidence, which no longer admits of doubt. The history says nothing more of what passed between them, excepting that Biribinquer, when he awaked the next morning, found himself, to his great astonishment, upon the same couch, in the same apartment, under the same palace-roof, and in the same situation in which he had been the day preceding, at the same hour !

" The beautiful undina — nobody knows how or wherefore—was at no great distance from him ; and no sooner perceived him to be awake, than with that enchanting gracefulness which had so captivated him but a few hours before — but which at this moment seemed a matter of perfect indifference to his philosophic soul—she apostrophised him in the following manner :—

" 'Fate, my dear Biribinquer, has singled you out to oblige unfortunate fairies. Having the pleasure to be one of them, it is but just I should inform you who I am, and what obligations I owe to you. Know then that I am one of those fairies who are called undinæ, on account of their inhabiting the element of water, from the subtilest atoms of which their frame and being is composed. My name is Mirabella, and the fairy state, joined to that rank which my birth gives me among the undinæ, might have rendered me completely happy, had there been anything in the world capable of guarding us against the influences of our evil stars. Mine condemned me to be beloved by an old enchanter, whose profound science gave him an unlimited power over the elementary spirits: but withal, he was the most disagreeable creature in the world; and but for the friendship of a salamander, who was one of the favourites of the old Padmanaba——'

" 'How!' exclaimed the prince, 'Padmanaba, did you say? That man with a beard two yards long, and as white as snow, who transforms poor languishing lasses into chamber-pots, and little merry gnomes into bees?'

" 'Yes, 'twas really he,' replied the undina, 'who arrogated over my person the prerogatives of a husband, without the least capability of fulfilling the duties of that relation. A female who had preceded me, and whom he one day surprised in the arms of a gnome, had made him so mistrustful, that he grew jealous even of his own shadow. He had dismissed all the gnomes, and taken into their place none but salamanders, whose fiery nature he judged was rather calculated to inspire terror than love. You must certainly remember in your Ovid the story of the fair Semelé, who was reduced to ashes for her presumption in daring to embrace a salamander.* The old man, however, with all his foresight, forgot

* The poet calls him Jupiter. See *Metam. lib.* 3.



that the aqueous nature of the undinæ renders them perfectly safe against all such danger. On the contrary, this same aqueous nature so completely temperates the fire of a salamander into a gentle heat, as to render it very favourable to love. Padmanaba placed so entire a confidence in the fidelity of his favourite, that he left us all the liberty we could desire. You may imagine, perhaps, Prince Biribinquer, that we availed ourselves of these moments like material lovers; but if so, you are mistaken. Flox, which is the name of my friend the salamander, was at the same time the tenderest and the sprightliest lover in the world. He soon perceived that my heart could only be gained by good sense and understanding. He even carried his complaisance to my delicacy so far, that he did not once seem to observe that I had, as you see, a tolerably fine skin, a shape not at all despisable, and a pair of those pretty little delicate feet, which might just as emphatically have interpreted for me, as eyes could do for other persons. In a word, he lived with me as if I had consisted solely of spirit. Instead of toying and trifling with me as other lovers do, he analysed to me the mysterious writings of Averroës; we sat and talked sentimentally for whole days together; and though in the main it was all upon the same things, we contrived, however, to give the subject so many different turns, that it seemed as if we were continually treating of something new, when really it was no more than repetition upon repetition of the same sentiments. You see, my prince, nothing could be more innocent than our friendship, or, if you will, our love. And yet, in spite of all this, neither the purity of our intentions, nor the precaution of a young gnomide, or female gnome, who waited upon me, and was one of the cunningest little creatures that ever eyes beheld, could defend us against the malicious observations of those many envious eyes which were continually upon us. Several salamanders, offended

at the preference which I gave to my friend above them, grew so bold as to make certain remarks upon our conduct, which, as they pretended, must have arisen from certain familiarities, which they hinted they had observed between us. One pretended to discern that I was unusually gay and alert, and that a certain fire sparkled in my eyes, which had hitherto been extinguished for a considerable length of time. Another could not comprehend how my attachment to philosophy could be so great, as to make me fit to receive lessons in it, even in my bedroom, nay, and in bed too. A third would have it he had discovered a certain sympathy between our knees and elbows; and in short, a fourth persuaded himself of some unaccountable secret intelligence between our feet. You see, my prince, that even if amidst those distractions of thought to which metaphysical souls are the most frequently liable, anything of this kind had passed, it must have required all the malice, and the material mode of thinking of our worst enemies, to have interpreted trifles like these to the disadvantage of such virtue as had always maintained itself in a well-founded reputation, by the most rigid rules of morality.

" ' However, our enemies continued to murmur so loudly, that at length it came to the ears of old Padmanaba, who was but too naturally inclined to listen with attention to all such insinuations. He was the more shocked and disturbed at this intelligence, on account of that high opinion he had hitherto entertained of my virtue, or at least of the coldness of my blood. Means were accordingly concerted to surprise us; and at last our enemies succeeded, taking us unawares in one of those above-mentioned distractions of mind, which for some moments was very unluckily too profound to leave us the free use and management of our senses. The thundering voice of the formidable Padmanaba at length aroused me from that kind of esctasy, in which an



interruption is extremely disagreeable. Judge you, how astonished and confounded I must be, on seeing myself exposed to the view of so many spectators, and in so critical a situation! All presence of mind, however, did not entirely leave me. I entreated my old husband not to condemn me before he had heard my justification; and was just going to prove to him by the seventh chapter of the metaphysics of Averroës, how deceitful and fallacious are the senses, when he cut me short with these words: "I have loved thee too much, thou ungrateful creature! to be capable of taking that vengeance upon thee which my offended honour demands. Thy punishment shall consist simply in a trial of that virtue to which thou still darest to pretend. I banish thee," continued he, touching me with his wand, "to the inclosure of the park which surrounds this mansion. Retain thy shape and the prerogatives of thy fairy condition; but lose them both, and be transformed into a hideous crocodile, so often as ever thou shalt lapse again, with whomsoever it may be, into a distraction of thought like that in which I have just now caught thee. It irks me that I have not power to render this enchantment indissoluble. But greatly am I apprehensive that future times will produce a prince, whose wondrous star shall defy every influence of my magic skill. All that I can do is to tie down the conditions of thy disenchantment to the talismanic virtue of a name so extraordinary, that, peradventure, millions of years may elapse before it shall ever be pronounced or heard in any language of the world."

"'The moment Padmanaba uttered these mysterious words, I was transported by an invisible power into that great basin of water, in which you first beheld me, and shortly after, I learned that the old man, deeply chagrined at my pretended infidelity, had left the palace without any one's knowing what became of him, or of my beloved salamander. I was

inconsolable for the loss of the latter, which for some days put me into such an ill-humour with my nymphs, and made me give them such terrible looks, that some of them became paralytic at the sight of me, and others, half dead with the fright, fell in labour, and were brought to bed before their times. But as great grief seldom lasts long, mine ceased the moment I called to mind that Padmanaba had at least left me one way to save my honour and secure my virtue. What shall we say to it, Prince Biribinquer? More than fifty thousand princes and cavaliers have for upwards of a century past, attempted in vain that adventure, which you alone were capable of achieving. What complaints, what maledictions have resounded through the forest, when those unfortunates, instead of a charming nymph whom they fancied they were embracing, suddenly beheld a hideous crocodile. The horror which so humiliating a recollection excites in my soul, hinders me from proceeding. 'Tis true, this horrible metamorphosis presently ceased; but every fresh attempt they made to disenchant me, only served continually to produce the same effect. The basin before-mentioned, which formerly was of an ordinary size, is now become so deep by the addition of their tears, that, as you saw, it looks rather like a little lake, where several of them, who in despair plunged themselves headlong, would have found death in the watery element, had not my nymphs dragged them out and reconciled them to life. You alone, thrice happy Biribinquer! you alone were fortunate enough to annihilate an enchantment, which hitherto had reduced me to the melancholy necessity of having so many millions of spectators to witness my wretchedness——'

"'But stay now,' said the prince, 'this is the very circumstance I cannot see through. What occasion had you for all these witnesses? Methinks the honour and reputation of your virtue, as you are



pleased to call it, would have been better justified if you had never reduced yourself to the hazard of becoming a crocodile at all.'

"'Why there!' replied Mirabella, 'this is the way in which you and such as you reason. But pray tell me, if you please, what glory can result from a constrained virtue? What female is there who may not restrain her desires, while she beholds at the same time the impossibility of gratifying them, and the opprobrium of that punishment which must attend the gratification? But to sacrifice the fear of shame, and, in a certain sense, virtue itself, to the love of virtue; this is a degree of moral heroism, of which none are capable but the most exalted souls.'

"'Well, but prithee now,' said Biribinquer, 'explain this matter to me a little more clearly. I am not quite stupid in other respects; but may I be hanged if I have comprehended a syllable of what you have been saying.'

"'Our virtue,' replied the fairy, 'is then only a merit when it depends upon ourselves, whether to sacrifice or to preserve it. Lucretia would never have been held forth as a pattern of chastity, had she reduced young Tarquin to an impossibility of attempting her honour. An ordinary virtue might have bolted her chamber door against intruders; the sublime Lucretia left her's open. She did more, for she even surrendered herself, to have an opportunity of testifying to all the world, by the great sacrifice which she made to virtue, that the slightest stain which obscured its native lustre, deserved to be obliterated with her blood.

"'You see by this instance, my prince, how highly the refined mode of thinking in great souls is elevated beyond the ideas of those persons whom we might morally call "little folks." To destroy an enchantment which bereft my virtue of its highest value—the liberty and the pleasure of triumphing over difficulties—it was necessary for me to put

myself so frequently in a condition of offending that virtue, until I should have met with the person who could deliver me from a burden, the bare idea of which is insupportable to my exalted way of thinking. I hope you understand me now ? '

" ' Oh yes, wonderfully well,' cried Biribinquer ; ' you always explain yourself most intelligibly. But, begging your pardon, I must confess I think you the most singularly finical, delicate, nice lady that ever eyes beheld.'

" ' What do you say ? ' answered the beautiful undina with great vivacity ; ' what ! finical ? Me finical, did you say ? O' my conscience, you must either know me very ill, or else you have never seen a finical lady since the hour you were born. What is it you can find stiff or affectedly formal in my person, manners, dress, or mode of speaking ? what awkwardness or constraint. In one word, do you wish me to give you proofs that I am the farthest upon earth from being that fantastic thing you talk of ? '

" Biribinquer was equally startled at this unexpected proposition, as at the manner of her demonstrating the seriousness with which she spoke. ' Oh, dear madam,' replied he, ' I shall believe anything you'd have me. There's no occasion for further proofs ; nor can I for the life of me conceive how your virtue——'

" ' Ha ! my virtue,' exclaimed the fairy. ' Why, 'tis that very virtue which requires that I should convince you I am not finical, nor formal, nor affected.'

" ' Well then,' retorted Biribinquer, ' if you are not so, I swear to you I am no salamander, nor am I of so fiery a nature——'

" ' Fie ! ' cried the undina ; ' are you not ashamed to talk so indecently before a woman ? What can have possessed your brain ? Who asks you anything respecting your nature, or what is it to me whether it be full of fire or cold as frost ? This I can assure you, you are a young man void of delicacy,



and know not how to address the ears or the cheeks of a lady. Are you not sensible that it is a crime to make a woman blush for nothing? Our virtue——'

"'Oh, madam!' interrupted Biribinquer, 'I beg of you, mention that word no more: if you did but know how it distorts that pretty mouth of yours—and permit me to tell you, with the utmost delicacy in my power, I apprehend I have done everything that can be expected from a gentleman, having achieved a business which has put the valour and patience of fifty thousand heroes to the proof. Whatever then is left still to do, I give up to the salamanders, sylphs, gnomes, fauns, and tritons of your acquaintance, who are now at full liberty to experience and to exercise your virtue without any intermission or molestation whatsoever. All I have to request of you, is your protection and my dismission.'

"'As to your dismission,' replied the charming Mirabella, 'you are entirely at your own disposal; for you know I never sent for you or desired your coming. But since you demand my protection, I must not conceal it from you, that your happiness depends upon your own conduct. If you go on at this rate, the protection of all the fairies in the universe will avail you nothing. Who ever saw a lover like you? You ramble about all day long in search of your beloved mistress, and then spend your nights in the arms of another. The next morning your love begins its pursuit again, and the next evening your infidelity again returns. What can be the issue of such a conduct? Surely your shepherdess must be a paragon of patience to be satisfied with this new vogue of making love.'

"'Upon my word,' cried the prince, 'it's mighty pretty for you, madam, to reproach me in this manner. I shall say no more, madam, but trust me, this eternal morality of yours, though you are very clever at it, begins to be somewhat tiresome. You

had better tell me how I may deliver my best-loved Galactina from the hands of that cursed giant, who yesterday brought her——'

"'Oh, give yourself no uneasiness about the giant,' said the undina. 'A rival that picks his teeth with a hedge stake, is not by any means so formidable as you may imagine; and I know a certain gnome, who, little as he seems, might do you more injury than this Caraculiamborix, was he two hundred yards higher than he is. In short, give yourself no concern about anything, but how to soften your shepherdess. The rest will follow of course; and if you should chance to have any need of my assistance, you have only to break this ostrich's egg which I now give to you, and take my word for it, it will do you full as good service as the fairy Crystallina's pea-shells.'

"No sooner had Mirabella uttered these last words than she disappeared, self, closet, palace and all: as for poor Biribinquer, he found himself, without knowing how, in the very spot where the giant Caraculiamborix had surprised him the day before with his fair shepherdess. No creature could be more astonished than he at the extraordinary things which had befallen him since his flight from the great bee-hive. He rubbed his eyes, pinched his arms, pulled himself by the nose, and would have been glad to inquire of any one, if any one could have told him, whether he was really Biribinquer, or whether it was some other wrapped up in his skin. The more he reflected upon the subject, the more likely it seemed to him that the whole was nothing but a dream; thus for a while he stood fixing himself in this opinion, when suddenly he beheld issuing from amidst the bushes a huntress, who, to judge by her shape and gait, seemed no other than Diana herself. Her robe of green, all over wrought with golden bees, was tucked up to her knees and fastened above her bosom by a clasp of diamonds. Her fair locks were partly tied up with a string of pearls, and partly flowed in wanton ringlets upon her



be caught by poetical flourishes. You must know how to convince us, if you would make us feel; and it is the force of truth alone which can bring us to a voluntary self-surrender.'

"Biribinquer was too well inured to the reprimands of those ladies into whose hands he fell, to lose courage on receiving such a reproach, as at the same time pointed out to him by what means he might hope to make his party good among the female disciples of Averroës. In fact, he discerned that he should have much less difficulty to subdue the fair nymph by the energy of truth, than by artificial and high-flown declarations of love. The charms of the undinæ, according to the authentic testimony of the Count de Gabalis, exceed everything that can be desired in the possession of the fairest among mortal beauties. In a word, to the wishes of this bright undina Biribinquer by degrees became more natural and more convincing; and though the lady herself very exactly observed what we call the gradations, she knew so well how to regulate her time, that just as the sable veil of night involved the hemisphere—just then had our prince carried conviction to that point of evidence, which no longer admits of doubt. The history says nothing more of what passed between them, excepting that Biribinquer, when he awaked the next morning, found himself, to his great astonishment, upon the same couch, in the same apartment, under the same palace-roof, and in the same situation in which he had been the day preceding, at the same hour!

"The beautiful undina — nobody knows how or wherefore—was at no great distance from him; and no sooner perceived him to be awake, than with that enchanting gracefulness which had so captivated him but a few hours before — but which at this moment seemed a matter of perfect indifference to his philosophic soul—she apostrophised him in the following manner:—

"'Fate, my dear Biribinquer, has singled you out to oblige unfortunate fairies. Having the pleasure to be one of them, it is but just I should inform you who I am, and what obligations I owe to you. Know then that I am one of those fairies who are called undinæ, on account of their inhabiting the element of water, from the subtilest atoms of which their frame and being is composed. My name is Mirabella, and the fairy state, joined to that rank which my birth gives me among the undinæ, might have rendered me completely happy, had there been anything in the world capable of guarding us against the influences of our evil stars. Mine condemned me to be beloved by an old enchanter, whose profound science gave him an unlimited power over the elementary spirits: but withal, he was the most disagreeable creature in the world; and but for the friendship of a salamander, who was one of the favourites of the old Padmanaba——'

"'How!' exclaimed the prince, 'Padmanaba, did you say? That man with a beard two yards long, and as white as snow, who transforms poor languishing lasses into chamber-pots, and little merry gnomes into bees?'

"'Yes, 'twas really he,' replied the undina, 'who arrogated over my person the prerogatives of a husband, without the least capability of fulfilling the duties of that relation. A female who had preceded me, and whom he one day surprised in the arms of a gnome, had made him so mistrustful, that he grew jealous even of his own shadow. He had dismissed all the gnomes, and taken into their place none but salamanders, whose fiery nature he judged was rather calculated to inspire terror than love. You must certainly remember in your Ovid the story of the fair Semelé, who was reduced to ashes for her presumption in daring to embrace a salamander.* The old man, however, with all his foresight, forgot

* The poet calls him Jupiter. See *Metam. lib.* 3.



that the aqueous nature of the undinæ renders them perfectly safe against all such danger. On the contrary, this same aqueous nature so completely temperates the fire of a salamander into a gentle heat, as to render it very favourable to love. Padmanaba placed so entire a confidence in the fidelity of his favourite, that he left us all the liberty we could desire. You may imagine, perhaps, Prince Biribinquer, that we availed ourselves of these moments like material lovers; but if so, you are mistaken. Flox, which is the name of my friend the salamander, was at the same time the tenderest and the sprightliest lover in the world. He soon perceived that my heart could only be gained by good sense and understanding. He even carried his complaisance to my delicacy so far, that he did not once seem to observe that I had, as you see, a tolerably fine skin, a shape not at all despisable, and a pair of those pretty little delicate feet, which might just as emphatically have interpreted for me, as eyes could do for other persons. In a word, he lived with me as if I had consisted solely of spirit. Instead of toying and trifling with me as other lovers do, he analysed to me the mysterious writings of Averroës; we sat and talked sentimentally for whole days together; and though in the main it was all upon the same things, we contrived, however, to give the subject so many different turns, that it seemed as if we were continually treating of something new, when really it was no more than repetition upon repetition of the same sentiments. You see, my prince, nothing could be more innocent than our friendship, or, if you will, our love. And yet, in spite of all this, neither the purity of our intentions, nor the precaution of a young gnomide, or female gnome, who waited upon me, and was one of the cunningest little creatures that ever eyes beheld, could defend us against the malicious observations of those many envious eyes which were continually upon us. Several salamanders, offended

at the preference which I gave to my friend above them, grew so bold as to make certain remarks upon our conduct, which, as they pretended, must have arisen from certain familiarities, which they hinted they had observed between us. One pretended to discern that I was unusually gay and alert, and that a certain fire sparkled in my eyes, which had hitherto been extinguished for a considerable length of time. Another could not comprehend how my attachment to philosophy could be so great, as to make me fit to receive lessons in it, even in my bedroom, nay, and in bed too. A third would have it he had discovered a certain sympathy between our knees and elbows; and in short, a fourth persuaded himself of some unaccountable secret intelligence between our feet. You see, my prince, that even if amidst those distractions of thought to which metaphysical souls are the most frequently liable, anything of this kind had passed, it must have required all the malice, and the material mode of thinking of our worst enemies, to have interpreted trifles like these to the disadvantage of such virtue as had always maintained itself in a well-founded reputation, by the most rigid rules of morality.

" ' However, our enemies continued to murmur so loudly, that at length it came to the ears of old Padmanaba, who was but too naturally inclined to listen with attention to all such insinuations. He was the more shocked and disturbed at this intelligence, on account of that high opinion he had hitherto entertained of my virtue, or at least of the coldness of my blood. Means were accordingly concerted to surprise us; and at last our enemies succeeded, taking us unawares in one of those above-mentioned distractions of mind, which for some moments was very unluckily too profound to leave us the free use and management of our senses. The thundering voice of the formidable Padmanaba at length aroused me from that kind of esctasy, in which an



interruption is extremely disagreeable. Judge you, how astonished and confounded I must be, on seeing myself exposed to the view of so many spectators, and in so critical a situation! All presence of mind, however, did not entirely leave me. I entreated my old husband not to condemn me before he had heard my justification; and was just going to prove to him by the seventh chapter of the metaphysics of Averroës, how deceitful and fallacious are the senses, when he cut me short with these words: "I have loved thee too much, thou ungrateful creature! to be capable of taking that vengeance upon thee which my offended honour demands. Thy punishment shall consist simply in a trial of that virtue to which thou still darest to pretend. I banish thee," continued he, touching me with his wand, "to the inclosure of the park which surrounds this mansion. Retain thy shape and the prerogatives of thy fairy condition; but lose them both, and be transformed into a hideous crocodile, so often as ever thou shalt lapse again, with whomsoever it may be, into a distraction of thought like that in which I have just now caught thee. It irks me that I have not power to render this enchantment indissoluble. But greatly am I apprehensive that future times will produce a prince, whose wondrous star shall defy every influence of my magic skill. All that I can do is to tie down the conditions of thy disenchantment to the talismanic virtue of a name so extraordinary, that, peradventure, millions of years may elapse before it shall ever be pronounced or heard in any language of the world."

"'The moment Padmanaba uttered these mysterious words, I was transported by an invisible power into that great basin of water, in which you first beheld me, and shortly after, I learned that the old man, deeply chagrined at my pretended infidelity, had left the palace without any one's knowing what became of him, or of my beloved salamander. I was

inconsolable for the loss of the latter, which for some days put me into such an ill-humour with my nymphs, and made me give them such terrible looks, that some of them became paralytic at the sight of me, and others, half dead with the fright, fell in labour, and were brought to bed before their times. But as great grief seldom lasts long, mine ceased the moment I called to mind that Padmanaba had at least left me one way to save my honour and secure my virtue. What shall we say to it, Prince Biribinquer? More than fifty thousand princes and cavaliers have for upwards of a century past, attempted in vain that adventure, which you alone were capable of achieving. What complaints, what maledictions have resounded through the forest, when those unfortunates, instead of a charming nymph whom they fancied they were embracing, suddenly beheld a hideous crocodile. The horror which so humiliating a recollection excites in my soul, hinders me from proceeding. 'Tis true, this horrible metamorphosis presently ceased; but every fresh attempt they made to disenchant me, only served continually to produce the same effect. The basin before-mentioned, which formerly was of an ordinary size, is now become so deep by the addition of their tears, that, as you saw, it looks rather like a little lake, where several of them, who in despair plunged themselves headlong, would have found death in the watery element, had not my nymphs dragged them out and reconciled them to life. You alone, thrice happy Biribinquer! you alone were fortunate enough to annihilate an enchantment, which hitherto had reduced me to the melancholy necessity of having so many millions of spectators to witness my wretchedness——'

"'But stay now,' said the prince, 'this is the very circumstance I cannot see through. What occasion had you for all these witnesses? Methinks the honour and reputation of your virtue, as you are



pleased to call it, would have been better justified if you had never reduced yourself to the hazard of becoming a crocodile at all.'

"'Why there!' replied Mirabella, 'this is the way in which you and such as you reason. But pray tell me, if you please, what glory can result from a constrained virtue? What female is there who may not restrain her desires, while she beholds at the same time the impossibility of gratifying them, and the opprobrium of that punishment which must attend the gratification? But to sacrifice the fear of shame, and, in a certain sense, virtue itself, to the love of virtue; this is a degree of moral heroism, of which none are capable but the most exalted souls.'

"'Well, but prithee now,' said Biribinquer, 'explain this matter to me a little more clearly. I am not quite stupid in other respects; but may I be hanged if I have comprehended a syllable of what you have been saying.'

"'Our virtue,' replied the fairy, 'is then only a merit when it depends upon ourselves, whether to sacrifice or to preserve it. Lucretia would never have been held forth as a pattern of chastity, had she reduced young Tarquin to an impossibility of attempting her honour. An ordinary virtue might have bolted her chamber door against intruders; the sublime Lucretia left her's open. She did more, for she even surrendered herself, to have an opportunity of testifying to all the world, by the great sacrifice which she made to virtue, that the slightest stain which obscured its native lustre, deserved to be obliterated with her blood.

"'You see by this instance, my prince, how highly the refined mode of thinking in great souls is elevated beyond the ideas of those persons whom we might morally call "little folks." To destroy an enchantment which bereft my virtue of its highest value—the liberty and the pleasure of triumphing over difficulties—it was necessary for me to put

myself so frequently in a condition of offending that virtue, until I should have met with the person who could deliver me from a burden, the bare idea of which is insupportable to my exalted way of thinking. I hope you understand me now ? '

" ' Oh yes, wonderfully well,' cried Biribinquer ; ' you always explain yourself most intelligibly. But, begging your pardon, I must confess I think you the most singularly finical, delicate, nice lady that ever eyes beheld.'

" ' What do you say ? ' answered the beautiful undina with great vivacity ; ' what ! finical ? Me finical, did you say ? O' my conscience, you must either know me very ill, or else you have never seen a finical lady since the hour you were born. What is it you can find stiff or affectedly formal in my person, manners, dress, or mode of speaking ? what awkwardness or constraint. In one word, do you wish me to give you proofs that I am the farthest upon earth from being that fantastic thing you talk of ? '

" Biribinquer was equally startled at this unexpected proposition, as at the manner of her demonstrating the seriousness with which she spoke. ' Oh, dear madam,' replied he, ' I shall believe anything you'd have me. There's no occasion for further proofs ; nor can I for the life of me conceive how your virtue——'

" ' Ha ! my virtue,' exclaimed the fairy. ' Why, 'tis that very virtue which requires that I should convince you I am not finical, nor formal, nor affected.'

" ' Well then,' retorted Biribinquer, ' if you are not so, I swear to you I am no salamander, nor am I of so fiery a nature——'

" ' Fie ! ' cried the undina ; ' are you not ashamed to talk so indecently before a woman ? What can have possessed your brain ? Who asks you anything respecting your nature, or what is it to me whether it be full of fire or cold as frost ? This I can assure you, you are a young man void of delicacy,



and know not how to address the ears or the cheeks of a lady. Are you not sensible that it is a crime to make a woman blush for nothing? Our virtue——'

"'Oh, madam!' interrupted Biribinquer, 'I beg of you, mention that word no more: if you did but know how it distorts that pretty mouth of yours—and permit me to tell you, with the utmost delicacy in my power, I apprehend I have done everything that can be expected from a gentleman, having achieved a business which has put the valour and patience of fifty thousand heroes to the proof. Whatever then is left still to do, I give up to the salamanders, sylphs, gnomes, fauns, and tritons of your acquaintance, who are now at full liberty to experience and to exercise your virtue without any intermission or molestation whatsoever. All I have to request of you, is your protection and my dismission.'

"'As to your dismission,' replied the charming Mirabella, 'you are entirely at your own disposal; for you know I never sent for you or desired your coming. But since you demand my protection, I must not conceal it from you, that your happiness depends upon your own conduct. If you go on at this rate, the protection of all the fairies in the universe will avail you nothing. Who ever saw a lover like you? You ramble about all day long in search of your beloved mistress, and then spend your nights in the arms of another. The next morning your love begins its pursuit again, and the next evening your infidelity again returns. What can be the issue of such a conduct? Surely your shepherdess must be a paragon of patience to be satisfied with this new vogue of making love.'

"'Upon my word,' cried the prince, 'it's mighty pretty for you, madam, to reproach me in this manner. I shall say no more, madam, but trust me, this eternal morality of yours, though you are very clever at it, begins to be somewhat tiresome. You

had better tell me how I may deliver my best-loved Galactina from the hands of that cursed giant, who yesterday brought her——'

"'Oh, give yourself no uneasiness about the giant,' said the undina. 'A rival that picks his teeth with a hedge stake, is not by any means so formidable as you may imagine; and I know a certain gnome, who, little as he seems, might do you more injury than this Caraculiamborix, was he two hundred yards higher than he is. In short, give yourself no concern about anything, but how to soften your shepherdess. The rest will follow of course; and if you should chance to have any need of my assistance, you have only to break this ostrich's egg which I now give to you, and take my word for it, it will do you full as good service as the fairy Crystallina's pea-shells.'

"No sooner had Mirabella uttered these last words than she disappeared, self, closet, palace and all: as for poor Biribinquer, he found himself, without knowing how, in the very spot where the giant Caraculiamborix had surprised him the day before with his fair shepherdess. No creature could be more astonished than he at the extraordinary things which had befallen him since his flight from the great bee-hive. He rubbed his eyes, pinched his arms, pulled himself by the nose, and would have been glad to inquire of any one, if any one could have told him, whether he was really Biribinquer, or whether it was some other wrapped up in his skin. The more he reflected upon the subject, the more likely it seemed to him that the whole was nothing but a dream; thus for a while he stood fixing himself in this opinion, when suddenly he beheld issuing from amidst the bushes a huntress, who, to judge by her shape and gait, seemed no other than Diana herself. Her robe of green, all over wrought with golden bees, was tucked up to her knees and fastened above her bosom by a clasp of diamonds. Her fair locks were partly tied up with a string of pearls, and partly flowed in wanton ringlets upon her



ivory shoulders. She carried a javelin in her hands and a quiver of gold hung at her back. 'For once, however,' said Biribinquer to himself, 'I am now sure that this is no dream;' and thus still musing and wondering at this bright huntress, he insensibly drew so near her as presently to discern it was his dear Galactina. Never had she appeared to him so ravishingly beauteous as in this striking dress, which gave her the air of a goddess. He instantly forgot all the Crystallinas and Mirabellas that had ever enchanted him before; he threw himself at her feet, and testified to her in the most lively terms his transport at having found her once again. The beautiful Galactina, however, was more a mistress of his adventures than he could have imagined.

"'How!' said she, turning away her charming face with a kind of indignation that did but the more to heighten her charms, 'and darest thou again appear before my eyes, after having rendered thyself, by repeated injuries, so unworthy the pardon I had already once granted thee?'

"'Divine Galactina,' replied Biribinquer, 'let me not be the object of your anger, nor turn from me those eyes, unless you wish me to fall a lifeless victim at your feet.'

"'Leave me, and silence thy romantic follies,' said the fair huntress; 'follies which thou art but too well accustomed to lavish upon every new comer. Thou hast never loved me, inconstant creature that thou art! He who loves all, loves none.'

"'Never,' cried Biribinquer, with tears in his eyes, 'never have I loved any other than you. This is a declaration so true, that I could swear everything which happened to me in a certain palace, was but a shadow or a dream. At least, I can positively assure you that those heedlessnesses, upon which you pass so harsh a construction, were only wanderings of the senses in which my heart had not the least share.'

"'A fine distinction truly,' replied the huntress; 'and do you call these heedlessnesses? But take my word for it, I will have no concern with any lover that is subject to such heedlessnesses. I have never studied the philosophy of Averroës; on the contrary, I am a creature of so material and dull a species, that I cannot comprehend how the heart of my lover can be innocent, when his senses are unfaithful to me.'

"'Pardon me only this once, madam,' said Biribinquer, sobbing.

"'Me! I pardon you!' interrupted the fair Galactina, 'and prithee why should I pardon you? Look at me then; is it likely that one with a face like mine can think herself obliged to pardon? or can you think that, to gain lovers if I wanted any, I must be as tame and patient as you would have me? No, trust me, I can choose whenever I please from amongst twenty others, who know far better how to value a heart which you thus coolly and deliberately neglect.'

"These words, though accompanied with a look that at least diminshed more than half the severity of them, reduced poor Biribinquer to downright despair. 'What is it I hear,' said he, 'O cruel fair one; and would you then urge my death? Cannot my tears avail to move your pity? No, by all the divinities I swear, never will I endure that any other than Biribinquer——'

"'Oh, most odious of all monsters!' exclaimed Galactina in the height of fury; 'and dost thou still harrow up my ears with that detested name, which twice already hath transfixed my very soul? Fly, fly for ever from my sight! or look to endure the most terrible effects of that perpetual hatred which I have sworn to thee, and thy accursed name!'

"Biribinquer trembled to behold his fair one thus suddenly brought up to the extremity of rage. In the height of his distress, how did he curse the name of Biribinquer, and execrate those who had bestowed



it on him! In all probability, for he would not positively assert it, he might have dashed his brains against the next oak he came to, if, lo! at the same instant he had not perceived six hogras,* which issued from the wood, running towards them, and seized the beauteous huntress before his eyes. These hogras were of a size more than human. Round their heads and waists they wore great branches of oak in the form of garlands, and upon their left shoulder they carried a massive club of steel. Thus equipped, Biribinquer found them so formidable, that in spite of all his native valour, he despaired of being able to extricate his beloved mistress from their clutches. In this urgent necessity, he called to mind the ostrich's egg which the fairy Mirabella had given him. He broke it trembling, and, as may easily be conceived, was now more than ever astonished to behold the appearance of an infinite number of nymphs, tritons, dolphins, and so forth, which in the

* Authors, who know no better, have presumptuously ventured to assert, that the hogra, ogre or oger, is a species of imaginary monster. We, for a good while, were simple enough to be of the same opinion; and accordingly, at the beginning of book the fifth, have translated the word, hyena or chimera. But, on dipping into the elaborate writings of Madame d'Anois, that faithful historian of the fairies, how greatly were we surprised and delighted to find the truth burst upon us in the following description, which we cannot withhold from our less intelligent readers: "The ogres," says she, "eat up every body that comes in their way, and are the most terrible race of beings in the world. When they have once fed upon fresh meat (for so they call man's flesh) they can eat nothing else. They are half-fairies, very greedy, and never can more hideous figures terrify mankind with a resemblance of human creatures; for they are full as tall as giants. Each has a saucer-eye in the middle of the forehead. Their noses are flat and broad. Their ears are like those of an ass. They go clothed over with snakes of all colours, shocking to behold! Their hair is like hog's bristles. They have paws instead of hands, in which they carry great iron clubs. Their skin is pistol proof. They have a large bunch on their body, both before and behind, and they dwell in a very desolate country, thinly inhabited." And we may add, which neither the travelling Jew, nor Jason, nor Hercules, nor Cadmus, nor Columbus; nor yet Rogers, nor Anson, nor Bankes, nor Solander, nor any but Madame d'Anois, and our Author, ever yet saw and survived.

twinkling of an eye, grew larger and larger ; and some from their urns, and the rest through their nostrils, poured forth so prodigious a quantity of water, that in less than a minute it had formed itself into a lake bounded only by the horizon. He found himself seated on the back of a dolphin, which swam along with him so very gently that the prince hardly perceived himself to move, while the nymphs and tritons that dived and tumbled around him, used all their endeavours to divert him with their music, and a thousand whimsical and sportive gambols. Biribinquer, however, could only keep looking towards the spot where he had been so recently compelled to abandon to the hogras his best beloved Galactina. At length, no longer able to distinguish any objects whithersoever he turned, nor any thing about him but the liquid element, his affliction became so great, that he was often tempted to plunge himself into the foaming flood: indeed, nothing, in all likelihood, could have prevented him, but his fear of falling into the arms of one of those nymphs who swam around his dolphin ; which, as he very wisely judged, might easily have tempted him to infringe that eternal fidelity which he had just before sworn to his fair mistress. Nay, so far did he carry his scruples for this once, that he tied up his eyes with a silk handkerchief, for fear of being too much affected by those encircling beauties, who by a thousand seducing motions might lay snares for his constancy.

" He had now been swimming two hours in this manner without meeting with the least accident, when by chance moving the handkerchief a little to see where he was, he found, to his great satisfaction, that the nymphs had disappeared ; but in return, he discovered something at a great distance issuing from the waves, which seemed to him as it were an huge mountain. He also perceived that the lake became very tempestuous, and soon after a furious hurricane arose, accompained with showers of rain so



violent, that it appeared as if another ocean was tumbling from the clouds.

"The cause of this tumult and confusion was a whale, but such a whale as is not to be seen or met with every day: for those which are commonly fished for upon the coasts of Greenland, are no more in comparison of this we are speaking of than one of those animalculæ which, by the help of a microscope, are seen floating by thousands in a single drop of water. Every time he breathed, which was once within four hours, he stirred up a tempest, and the floods which spouted from his nostrils occasioned such heavy rains, that all the adjacent countries were overflowed with them for fifty leagues round. The motion of the lake was so violent that Biribinquer could no longer keep his seat upon the dolphin; accordingly he abandoned himself to the waves, and lay as their sport for some time, till at length he was drawn forward by the air inhaled by this prodigious fish, and in this manner was at last sucked into the body of the monster through one of his wide nostrils. There he kept falling downward for some hours incessantly, without knowing what was to become of him, so great was his giddiness and astonishment of soul! At length, however, he perceived himself to be fallen into a great mass of waters that filled up one of the cavities of the whale's belly. It was but a small lake indeed, yet it covered a circumference of between ten and a dozen leagues; and here in all probability must Biribinquer have found the end of all his adventures, had he not, by great good luck, dropped so near the shore of an island, that he had but about two hundred paces to swim before he could reach firm ground.

"Necessity, the mother of all arts, taught him to swim this once, and the only time he had ever swam since the hour he was born. Luckily for him, he reached land, and after having seated himself for a little while upon a rock, which like all other rocks



was of stone, but at the same time as soft as a pillow, he amused himself while his clothes lay drying in the sun, with breathing a delicious odour conveyed to him over the adjacent country from a little forest of cinnamon trees that extended itself towards the coast. His clothes dried, and being curious to see the country, and inform himself whether it was inhabited, and by whom, he descended from the rock the moment he found his spirits a little recruited, and travelled for about half an hour through the forest." At length he arrived at a large garden, in which every species of tree, shrub, plant, flower and herb in the known world, grew and blossomed around him in charming confusion and disorder. Art lay so concealed in the arrangement of this garden, that the whole appeared only as a sport and pastime of wanton nature. Here and there he discerned nymphs of dazzling beauty, lying under the shade of fragrant thickets, or reclined in cool grottoes, pouring through their urns little rivulets that ran meandering through the wondrous scene, and while in some places they spurted forth in fountains, in others they fell dashing in cascades, or met together in basins surrounded with marble of every sort and colour. These basins swarmed as it were with all kinds of fishes, which, contrary to the custom of creatures of their species, sung so melodiously, that Biribinquer stood quite enraptured at the sound. In particular, he admired a carp, which chanted the finest treble in the world, trilling forth such ecstatic quavers as might have done honour to the first castrati in Italy.* The prince listened to him a long time with great pleasure, but all these wonders served only to excite his curiosity the more. He determined to know who this enchanted island belonged to, and whether, as he supposed, he was really in a subterraneous world or no. To this end he put

* *Fuimus Romani*; *et nunc.*—See the Roman History, and *The Present State of Italy.*





several questions to these fishes: 'For,' said he to himself, 'as they sing so well, in all probability they can talk better still.' The fishes, however, kept on their singing, without giving him any answer, or seeming to pay the least attention to anything he said.

"Accordingly he gave it up, and pursued his journey, till at length he came to a large kitchen-garden. Here every plant and vegetable seemed to grow abundantly, and in the greatest perfection, without the least culture. While he was endeavouring to strike out a path in this kind of wilderness as well as he could, he chanced to hit his right foot against a large pompion, that nearly in size resembled the prominent belly of a Chinese mandarin, and which he had not taken notice of before, as it lay blended with its broad leaves.

"'Signior Biribinquer!' said the pompion, 'another time, pray, be kind enough to look a little before you, and take care how you stumble over the paunch of an honest pompion.'

"'I humbly beg your pardon, my friend pompion,' replied Biribinquer; 'upon my word, it was not done designedly, and I certainly should have been more cautious, could I have supposed that the pompions of this island had been personages of that importance which I now see they are. I am rejoiced, however, that this little accident introduces me to the pleasure of your acquaintance; for now I hope you will be so obliging as to inform me where I am, and what I am to think of all that I see and hear in this new scene of abode?"

"'Prince Biribinquer,' replied the pompion, 'your presence is too agreeable to my wishes, to suffer me to neglect so favourable an opportunity of rendering you, with the greatest pleasure, every little service in my power. Know then, that you are now in the belly of a whale, and this island——'

"'In the belly of a whale?' exclaimed Biribinquer. 'This exceeds everything that has happened

to me yet. Look ye, pompion, I swear to you, from this moment, nothing in the world shall ever surprise me again. Egad! if one may find air, and water, and islands, and gardens, and as it seems to me, even a sun, moon and stars in a whale's belly; if the rocks are as soft as cushions; if the fishes sing like nightingales, and even pompions can talk——'

"'Oh, but stop,' cried the pompion in his turn, 'as to this last matter, you'll please to observe, I am peculiarly distinguished from all other pompions, cucumbers, and melons in the whole garden; and you might safely walk over or tread upon a hundred of them without squeezing out a single syllable.'

"'Well then, I beg your pardon again,' said the prince.

"'There's no need of that,' replied pompion; 'I assure you, I should have been very sorry if this accident had not happened to me. I have long since my being here expected your coming, and was beginning to despair of ever seeing this fortunate event; for believe me, to any one not born to be a pompion, tis a very tedious circumstance to lie so for two hundred years together as I have done, especially when one is fond of conversation, and has been used to good company. At last, however, the time is come for you to avenge me of that cursed Padmanaba.'

"'What do you say about Padmanaba?' said Biribinquer; 'are you speaking of that enchanter who turned the beautiful Crystallina into a chamber-pot, and condemned the more beautiful Mirabella to become a crocodile every time she endeavoured to put her virtue to the proof?'

"'This question of yours,' replied the pompion, 'assures me I was not deceived in taking you for the Prince Biribinquer; I can see from thence, that more than half of this old wretch's enchantments are already dissolved, and that the moment of my deliverance is come.'



" ' What then,' demanded Biribinquer, ' have you any complaint to lay against him ? '

" ' I ask your pardon,' replied pompion, ' if this question makes me laugh ; ' and laugh indeed did he most heartily, so long and so loud, that by reason of his short breath, a consequence of his big belly, he fell into a violent fit of coughing for a great while before he could recover his voice. ' Why, don't you observe then,' continued he, ' that I must certainly be a something better than I appear to be ? Did not Mirabella tell you anything of a certain salamander, who had the honour of being surprised by old Padmanaba under certain circumstances ? '

" ' Yes, yes,' said Biribinquer, ' she did. I remember she told me of a certain sprightly lover who entertained and engrossed her mind with the sublime mysteries and philosophy of Averroës, in such a manner that she paid no attention to certain little experiments ; and that just in the interim——'

" ' Softly, softly,' cried the pompion, ' I see you know more of the matter than you needed to have known. I am that salamander, that Flox, who, as I told you, and as you knew before, was fortunate enough to make the charming Mirabella some amends for those tedious nights she was obliged to spend with the old enchanter. The above-mentioned scene, at which he had the stupidity to be present as a spectator, without being invited, threw him into a kind of despair, yet was not sufficient to cure him of his ridiculous and ill-placed passion. His palace, and every other place of abode, of which he had his choice in whatever element he pleased, now became odious to him. He no longer put any confidence either in mortals or immortals. Gnomes, sylphs, tritons, salamanders, all alike became objects of mistrust and suspicion ; nor could he think himself any where secure, but in some solitude utterly inaccessible. After having formed many projects, which he almost as instantly rejected, at length he took it into his

head to retire into the belly of this whale, where, as he supposed, no creature would come to seek after him. Here, by the help of the salamanders, he built him a palace, and then, to prevent their betraying him, he changed them, as well as myself, into so many pompions, on condition so to remain, until Prince Biribinquer should come in person, and restore us to our former shape. I was the only one to whom he indulged the use of reason and speech; the former of which, he supposed, would only serve to torment me with the remembrance of my lost felicity; and the latter to enable me to utter many a vain 'oh,' or 'alas!' and waste my spirits in mournful soliloquies. However, for once this sagacious villain is caught out with a vengeance, for unfavourable as the figure and organism of a pompion may seem for making observations, 'tis by no means ill-adapted for reasonings and arguments *a priori*; and besides, in the course of a hundred years, one gets at many things by degrees that tend either to confirm our hypotheses preconceived, or lead us onward to new discoveries. In short, I am not so ignorant of the slightest motions of Signior Padmanaba, as perhaps he may imagine me to be; and I flatter myself I can give you such hints as may enable you to render all his precautions vain and fruitless.'

"'I shall esteem myself infinitely obliged to you,' replied the prince; 'for I feel within me a singular propensity to play old Padmanaba some shrewd turn. 'Tis certainly the influence of my stars that inclines me so, for I cannot say that in my life he ever personally offended me.'

"'What!' said the pompion, 'is it not a sufficient offence, to have been the sole cause why the great Caramussal, who dwells on the summit of Mount Atlas, should have given you the name of Biribinquer?—a name which already hath been so fatal to your interest with your beauteous milkmaid?'



" ' And is old Padmanaba then the cause of my being called Biribinquer ? ' cried the prince, full of astonishment. ' I beseech you, explain to me a little the connection of all this business ; for I protest to you, I have often puzzled my brain to no end, in order to learn, if possible, the mystery of a name, to which, as it hitherto seems, I am indebted for all my extraordinary adventures. But in particular I should be glad to know whence it comes to pass, that wherever I am, or whoever I meet, even the very pompions all know my name ; and every body, the moment I appear, is as well acquainted with all the circumstances of my history, as if it were written upon my forehead.'

" ' I am not yet permitted,' replied the pompion, ' to satisfy your curiosity on this head. Let it suffice to say, that it entirely depends upon you, to inform yourself further, after what I shall tell you. The greatest difficulty of all is now surmounted. Padmanaba certainly never imagined you would find him out in his whale's belly.'

" ' And I must sincerely confess to you,' interrupted Biribinquer, ' I had it still less in my idea than he ; and you will allow he has at least done all he could to avoid his destiny. But you just now mentioned something of a palace that this old man had built in this island by the assistance of the salamanders. We are now, I suppose, in the gardens belonging to that palace ; but how is it, I can see nothing of the edifice ? '

" ' The reason,' answered pompion, ' is a very simple one. You would infallibly see it, if it was not invisible.'

" ' Invisible ! ' cried Biribinquer. ' But I hope, at least, it is not impalpable too ? '

" ' No,' replied Flox ; ' but, as it is built of compacted flames——'

" ' How ! ' interrupted Biribinquer ; ' this is a mighty odd kind of palace : but pray now,

granting it to be built of flames, how can it be invisible ? '

" ' That,' said the pompion, ' is the very point in which the wonder consists. In short, whether it be possible or not, the circumstance is no less true. You will never be able to see the palace, at least in your present condition ; but all you have to do is to walk on for about two hundred paces, and then the heat you will feel will soon convince you of the truth of what I have told you.'

" The extraordinary things Biribinquer had already seen in the whale's belly, and who indeed would expect anything less than extraordinary in the belly of a whale ? might naturally be supposed to make him the more readily give credit to all he had heard. For this once, however, he was so headstrong, that he would trust nobody but his own self, and his own senses. Accordingly he advanced towards the invisible palace ; but no sooner had he got about two hundred paces on his way, than he felt a prodigious heat increasing at every step. The farther he proceeded, the more did the heat and a certain invisible radiance rise upon him. He therefore thought it best to return, and look for his friend the pompion ; who, the moment he heard his footsteps, cried out, ' Well, Prince Biribinquer, will you trust my word for the future ? I hope you are now fully satisfied that nothing in nature can be more consistent than for a palace of flames to be inaccessible and invisible, merely from the force of its radiance and splendour.'

" ' In truth,' replied Biribinquer, ' I can more easily conceive this, than how I shall be able to get into that same palace. But I must tell thee, I feel within myself an irresistible desire to enter it ; and was it to cost me my life, I could readily——'

" ' It will not cost you so much,' interrupted the pompion. ' If you will but follow my directions, the palace will become visible to you, and you shall enter



it with as much safety as if it were a cottage of thatch. The method of doing so is very simple, and will cost you no more than a single leap——'

"'Don't keep me so long with your enigmas, pompion,' cried Biribinquer; 'tell me in one word what I am to do. Let the enterprise be difficult or not, you see me here ready to hazard everything in the world to get within side a palace invisible from its very lustre.'

"'Within sixty paces of this spot,' replied the pompion, 'just behind those pomegranate trees, in a little labyrinth composed of jasmines and rose-bushes, you will find a basin distinguished from the rest that lie round it, only by its being filled with fire, whereas the others are full of water. Go, prince, and plunge yourself into that basin; and then, in a quarter of an hour, return and tell me the effect which your bathing has upon you.'

"'Nothing but this!' exclaimed the prince, with a voice and air that expressed rather more vexation than contempt; 'why, pompion, methinks thou art only trifling with me. And so then I am to bathe myself first in a flood of fire, and after a quarter of an hour's stay there, am to return and tell thee what effect I feel from it? Prithee now, who ever heard of a scheme so extravagant as this?'

"'Don't be angry, prince,' said pompion, 'it is at your own option whether you choose to enter the invisible palace or no; and had you not seemed so determined upon the subject, I should never have thought of making you such a proposal.'

"'Monsieur Pompion,' replied Biribinquer, 'I perceive you are inclined to divert yourself at my expense: but let me tell you, I am not at present in a humour to be made your laughing-stock. I have no desire to enter the palace in the character of a departed spirit.'

"'Nor do I wish you,' said the pompion, briskly. 'This bath of fire which I propose to you, Prince

Biribinquer, is not so dangerous as you may imagine. Padmanaba himself makes use of it every third day, and without it he would be as little capable of inhabiting a fiery palace as yourself. For though, excepting the great Caramussal who dwells on the summit of Mount Atlas, he is the greatest and most powerful enchanter upon earth; yet is he of a nature and origin as terrestrial as your own. Were it not for the use of this bath, which is one of the profoundest secrets of his art, he would be incapable of enjoying that small particle of happiness which he at present enjoys, or at least seems so to do, in the company of that fair and beautiful salamander whom he keeps locked up in his palace. And you may guess for yourself, whether the possession which a Tithonus is capable of sharing with his Aurora, deserves to be called an enjoyment.'

"'What then,' said Biribinquer, 'has he a salamander with him?'

"'Why not?' replied pompion; 'do you suppose he would shut himself up in a whale's belly for nothing?'

"'But is she very beautiful?' continued Biribinquer.

"'Why, surely,' replied the pompion, 'if you are capable of asking such a question, you can never have seen a female salamander. Need you be told that the most beautiful of mortals is but a mere dowdy in comparison of our belles? Though indeed I know an undina, that in point of beauty may well enter the lists with the fairest salamander of them all. But then, you are to observe, there is but one Mirabella amongst the whole race of undinæ.'

"'Well then," cried the prince, 'if that is all, and if old Padmanaba's salamandra is not fairer than Mirabella, you might have excused yourself the trouble of depreciating the mortal beauties. I own to you that she has charms; but I know a certain milkmaid——'



"'Of whom,' said the pompion with a sneer, 'you are so enamoured, that you presently swore to Mirabella, you had never seen her.* The cause is best known by its effects, and if one was inclined to judge of your passion upon this principle——'

"'Why, upon my soul!' exclaimed Biribinquer, full of impatience, 'surely you think I am come hither for nothing less but to learn philosophy from a pompion! Tell me rather how I may get into that invisible palace; which, unless I do, I shall die with vexation. But prithee now, is there no other method but you must want to see me broiled like a rasher in that cursed bath of fire?'

"'What an odd creature you are!' cried the pompion. 'I have already told you once, how highly it concerned my own interests that you should enter the invisible palace; where, to judge from circumstances, one of the most extraordinary adventures in the world awaits you. Can you suppose then, that I am a pompion here for my own amusement, and that I do not wish as soon as possible to be set free from this devilish clumsy belly that sits so ill upon a spirit of my lively and speculative turn? I repeat it to you, that unless you choose to perish in the flames, you have no other way of getting into the palace, but through the fiery bath I have proposed to you. Sooner than die with impatience, as you talked of, you ought at least to try, were it only for a few minutes. Were you even to perish—though I can warrant you to the contrary—it is but meeting with one kind of death instead of another, which, by the way, will come when it will come.'

"'Well, well,' said Biribinquer, 'we shall see what's to be done. Perhaps I ought not to repose so much confidence in you as I now do; but my fate is stronger than my reason. I go then; and if in a quarter of an hour you hear nothing of me, even resign yourself patiently to remain a pompion, till

* See page 354.

old Padmanaba shall cease of his own accord to be plagued with love, or stung by jealousy.'

So saying, the prince made Pompion a very low bow, and advanced towards the labyrinth, in which he was to look for his fiery bath. There he found a large circular basin, the borders of which were edged with large square stones of solid diamond. In the basin was a vast quantity of fire, which, without being fed by any visible matter, mounted up in serpentine columns, resembling flashes of lightning, and continually touched without burning them, the rose-bushes that formed a kind of arbour round about the basin. In these wondrous flames were beheld innumerable colours, which varied every moment; and instead of smoke, a tepid, invisible exhalation, replete with the most delicious odours, diffused itself on every side. Biribinquer stood for some time considering this prodigy, in a state of irresolution, that redounded but little honour to a hero of the fairies, and in all probability still might he have stood on the edge of the basin, had not some power unseen plunged him quite unexpectedly into the midst of the flames. So great was his terror at the event, that it hindered him from crying out; but the moment he perceived that the fire he was in did not even burn a single hair of his head, and instead of putting him to any pain, rather pervaded his whole frame with a delightful sensation of glowing warmth, he soon recovered from his fright, and became so pleased with his situation, that he lay beating the flaming waves with his hands and feet, like a fish in common water. Nor is it at all unlikely but he might have exceeded the time prescribed in so delicious a bath, had not the heat, which every moment increased upon him, obliged him to retire. He accordingly made the best of his way out; but what was his astonishment, on finding himself so light and so immaterial, that, like a zephyr, he scarce touched the earth! and what completed his joy,



was to discover in the twinking of an eye, as it were, the palace in question, whose lustre and beauty surpassed all that the human eye had hitherto ever been able to behold. He stood for some time in a manner beside himself, and the first clear idea that struck his mind, when he recovered the power of thinking, was to represent to himself those splendours and that beauty which a palace so magnificent must contain. For diamonds and rubies seemed no more than the commonest street pebbles, if compared with the materials of which this brilliant mansion was composed; nor did he doubt but the fair salamandra, in comparison with all the other beauties he had ever yet known, would appear just as this structure now appeared in comparison with the other ordinary palaces of the fairies, which are thought to be built very sumptuously, when their walls are made of diamonds and emeralds, the ceiling of rubies, and the floors of pearl, and so forth: and yet all this could only have furnished out a mean hovel or cottage, compared with this palace of flaming fire.

"With his head full of these ideas, Biribinquer insensibly approached the palace, and had already crossed the first court, whose resplendent gate instantly opened to him of its own accord; when suddenly he recollected that the pompion had expressly told him he must come back and find him out again, after having bathed himself in the fiery basin. 'Probably,' said he to himself, 'he may have some instructions to give me, without which it might be dangerous to venture my person in such a building; and since I have hitherto met with so good success from his instructions, it would neither be prudent, nor grateful, were I to think of having no further need of his assistance. Who will say, after this, that he shall never be in such a condition as to want the good counsel of a pompion, when even a prince may find himself in a situation to require it?'

" Accordingly, Biribinquer retired very softly, and not without fear of being discovered, to seek his friend the pompion.

" ' So, so ! ' cried pompion as he drew nigh, ' I see the bath has had a wonderful effect upon you. O' my conscience, you look charmingly ; I swear by the virtue of my dearest Mirabella, that in the condition you now appear, no salamandra in the world could resist you a single minute. But what is to become of your fidelity to the milkmaid ? '

" ' My dear pompion,' said Biribinquer, ' notwithstanding the great regard I have for thee in other respects, I must tell thee, that in my present mood, fresh from the bath as thou seest me, thou wouldst do better to be more sparing of such impertinent remonstrances——'

" ' Oh ! I beg your pardon,' replied pompion, ' I only meant to say——'

" ' Very well,' interrupted the prince ; ' I know what you meant to say, and I tell you in answer, that without your exhortations, which imply an offensive diffidence of my firmness, I think myself as secure against the united charms of your fiery beauties, as I could be in the midst of the most ugly she-gnomes ; and that merely from the recollection of my divine milkmaid.'

" ' We shall see,' said the pompion, ' whether you will keep up to these generous sentiments ; I have as good an opinion of you as can possibly be after all that befell you lately in a certain palace ; but at the same time I cannot conceal it from you, that I perceive your fidelity to be in a very great jeopardy, if you enter into the luminous mansion before you. It still depends upon yourself, whether you will run the hazard of it or no. Think well of the matter, or else——'

" ' Friend pompion,' cried Biribinquer in a pet, ' I see thou hast the same strange propensity to reasoning, as the virtuous and affected lady, thy beloved



Mirabella, is plagued with. Prithee, why wouldst thou have me bathe myself as I have done, if I must not go into the palace? But once for all, my friend, put yourself into no concern about my fidelity; rather instruct me what I have to do when I get there.'

"'That requires very little instruction,' replied the pompion, 'for you will meet with no sort of resistance: every door will spontaneously open itself before you, and should you chance to have anything to fear, it can only arise from your own heart, as I told you before—though you are not very fond of hearing it.'

"'But with what kind of countenance dost thou think old Padmanaba will receive me?' demanded the prince.

"'Why,' replied the pompion, 'if we may give a guess from the motion of the stars, it is now midnight, a time at which the old fellow is generally in a sound sleep. But supposing he should wake, still you have nothing to fear from his anger. 'Tis not all his power can cope against the magical virtues of your name; and if one may judge by the advantages you have already gained over him, you may undoubtedly hope to be equally successful on the present occasion."

"'Let come what will,' cried Biribinquer, 'I am resolved to try the adventure of this invisible castle; for certainly it could not be without some good reason that I am thus strangely cooped up in a whale's belly. Well, pompion, good-night to you till I see you again.'

"'Much good luck be with thee, valiant and lovely Biribinquer!' cried the loquacious pompion. 'May prosperity still attend thy steps, thou flower and ornament of all fairy knights! and may the great adventure on which thou art marching with so much intrepidity and courage, meet with such an issue as never tale recorded since the first existence of fairies

and nurses in the whole universal world. Go, wise son of a king, whither thy destiny impels thee; but take heed of neglecting the advice of a pompion, who is not only thy friend, but perhaps penetrates into futurity with far more sagacity than any almanac-maker in all Christendom.'

"Pompion was so taken up with this fine parting harangue, that he did not perceive the prince had got through the first court of the palace before he had done speaking. Biribinquer, for his part, had at present no other concern or attention, but for the adventure which awaited him; and his imagination, which had been already exalted by the use of the fiery bath, represented the beautiful salamandra whom he hoped to see, as arrayed in such irresistible charms, that he could not help wishing, for this once only, that he might have a dispensation for being unfaithful to his dear milkmaid. While he went on thinking in this manner, he advanced through the second court, and came to a vestibule or large entry, in which his ears were instantly attacked with a prodigious noise and clatter. He stopped awhile to listen: at length he distinguished the shrill voices of females, who seemed to be in high dispute and contention; and, being naturally very curious, he could nor resist a desire of seeing who these agreeable voices belonged to. He opened the door of a large and superb hall; but what was his amazement on beholding the room filled with a group of at least fifty of the ugliest little she-dwarfs that ever could have been caricatured even by the burlesque imagination of a Hogarth or a Calot.

"Poor Biribinquer, at the first sight, thought all witches' Bedlam was broke loose upon him, and into a fit he certainly must have fell, had not these strange whimsical figures at the same time made him burst into an immoderate horse laugh. These charming nymphs, who were neither more nor less than gnomides, and the youngest of them at least



about eighty years old, no sooner perceived him than they all ran up towards him as fast as their crooked legs could carry them.

"'Ha! Prince Biribinquer,' cried one of the ugliest, 'you are just come in right time to decide a dispute which had almost set us to pulling off caps.'

"'I hope,' said Biribinquer, 'you are not quarrelling which is the prettiest of the company.'

"'Why not?' replied the gnomide, 'you have nicked the question to a needle's point. But only think of it, my handsome prince; after having got all the rest of them to give me the preference of the whole company, in point of beauty, this ill-favoured thing here, this puny pagoda, has the face to dispute the golden apple with me.'

"'Oh, agreeable young prince!' cried the lady accused, pinching him by the calves of his legs, which it seems, was one of her methods of caressing, 'I boldly venture to refer the decision of the matter to you. Look well at us both, consider us feature for feature, and then pronounce according to your conscience; perhaps I should flatter myself too much, were I to add, according to the emotions of your heart.'

"'Prince Biribinquer,' said the first female orator, 'is it easily to be conceived how impudence can be carried to such a height? In the first place, she is but a whole inch indeed shorter than I, and you will agree with me perhaps that this is not an object. As to her hump, I hope mine will never be ashamed to appear in the same list with hers—and my feet, as you see, are full as broad, and at least two good inches longer than hers are. I know indeed she makes a great ado and parade about the width and blackness of her neck and bosom; but yet,' continued she, turning aside her handkerchief, 'you will allow that mine, though not quite of the same circumference, is at least infinitely darker than hers.'

"'Granted,' cried the other; 'I give up to you

so frivolous an advantage, while convinced as I am, of having the superiority in every other point whatever.'

"'You laugh, my dear Prince Biribinquer, and indeed, nothing can be more laughable than this homely puss's vanity. I am ashamed of being obliged to praise myself; but only look and see how much crookeder, and more distorted my legs are than any she can boast of. I shall say nothing to you of other respects. He must be blind with a vengeance who cannot see at the first look that my eyes are much smaller, and more sunk by half than hers; that my cheeks too are above twice as much puffed out, and my lower lip is thicker, and hangs down much lower than her skinny dewlap; not to mention the preferable length of my ears, and that I have at least five or six more warts and wens in my face, with longer hairs sticking out of them, than she. But setting all this aside for a moment, let us now speak of the nose only. 'Tis true, hers is one of the largest that ever eyes beheld, and might indeed be thought the handsomest that ever sneezed, by anybody that had not seen mine: but all we have to do is to measure them, and then see whether my nose is not at least five or six inches longer, and does not hang much lower beneath my mouth than hers. Modesty does not permit me,' added she, with a horribly tender ogle, 'to talk to you respecting other beauties which none but a happy lover ought to see. However, I hope——'

"'Madam,' cried Biribinquer, the moment his loud bursts of laughter would suffer him to speak, 'I should not choose absolutely to set myself up for a connoisseur; but really, your friend is only trifling with us, if she thinks of disputing with you the superiority in point of beauty. The advantage which you have over her is palpable, and it is impossible for the good sense of messieurs the gnomes, not to do you all imaginable justice on that head.'



"At hearing this decision, the former gnomide seemed a good deal chagrined and angry. However, as Biribinquer now burned with impatience to see the beautiful salamandra, he gave himself very little concern what she muttered from betwixt her long teeth; but, wishing the whole charming assembly a good evening, took his leave of them. Instead of any reply, they were heard bursting out into loud fits of laughter—a matter, indeed, perfectly indifferent to the prince, who now beheld before him the palace, whose incomparable beauties drew all his attention. After having considered and admired it for some time, he perceived the two folding-doors in the front fly open; a circumstance which he naturally took for a sign that his enterprise would be crowned with all imaginable success. Accordingly, full of courage and high in hope, he entered, and after ascending a staircase, found himself in a large antechamber, which led him on to a long suite of apartments, whose splendour dazzled, and almost dimmed his sight, notwithstanding the change which the fiery bath had operated in his constitution.

"But, diversified and extraordinary as were those fine things which shone on all sides around him—all were forgotten, and his whole mind absorbed by certain pictures, which in every one of the rooms were hung up to represent a young female salamander of incomparable beauty. He had not a moment's doubt but that this was old Padmanaba's beloved mistress; and the copies before him, which exhibited her in every attitude imaginable, under every mode of dress, and in every possible point of view—sometimes awake, sometimes asleep; now like Diana, and now like Venus, Hebe, Flora, or some other goddess—all this gave him so great an idea of the original, that even in the bare expectation of his happiness to come, he felt an ecstasy of rapture. But especially was he caught, and scarcely could he enough feast his eyes with contemplating one large picture, in

which she was represented sitting in a bath of flames, and served by little gods of love, who at sight of her supernatural beauty seemed as it were beside themselves. Biribinquer was at a loss which he should most admire—whether the beauty of the object, or the great skill of the painter. At length he acknowledged, that in point of colouring, Titian and Rembrandt were no more than mere daubers, compared with the salamandrian painters. The impression which this picture made upon him was so strong, that he now wished with more impatience than ever to behold the object, whose inanimate copy alone was thus capable of inspiring him with such irresistible desires. He ran therefore through an infinite number of rooms, but without meeting a single creature. He hunted and ransacked the whole palace above and below, and several times over; but all still in vain—not a soul could he find. At length, however, he espied a door standing half-open, which led him out to one of the most extraordinary gardens that ever was seen. All the trees, plants, flowers, arbours, and fountains in this garden were of fire; every vegetable in it burned in natural colours, and with a lustre so agreeable and so vivid, that really the effect of the whole together surpassed in magnificence everything that imagination can form or mind conceive.

"Biribinquer cast but a cursory transient look upon this majestic spectacle, perceiving a pavilion at the bottom of the garden, in which he hoped to find his beautiful salamandra. He flew thither, and the door opened to him of its own accord, giving the prince a free passage through a large saloon into a cabinet at the farther end, in which he saw nobody but an old man of a majestic appearance, with a long beard white as snow, who was lying in a deep sleep upon a superb sofa. The prince had no doubt but this must be old Padmanaba himself; and though he was sure he had no violence to fear on his part,



yet could he not help trembling a little on finding himself in such a state of mind, and with such intentions too as he now had, so near the enchanter, and in a place entirely at the old man's disposal. However, the idea, that fate had made choice of him to destroy Padmanaba's enchantments, and a desire of seeing the beauteous salamandra, made him pluck up his courage and dare all events. He was just about to approach the sofa, in order to make himself master of a sabre that lay upon the pillow by the old man's side, when something which he had not hitherto perceived, seemed to hit against his foot. He stopped a moment, and feeling about with his hands, discovered one of the most charming little feet in the world, that lay stretched along upon another pillow. So unexpected an event made him curious to know the leg to which this delicate foot belonged: for in this case, Biribinquer reasoned as Thomas Aquinas himself would have done, viz., 'Where there is a foot, there, according to the common course of nature, we may rationally expect to find a leg.' He accordingly pursued his investigations, and at length, passing from beauty to beauty, discovered in the invisible figure before him a young lady, who seemed buried in a profound slumber, and, judging by the only sense that indicated to him the presence of this person, must be of such perfect beauty, that she could be no other than Venus herself, or at least the charming salamandra. At the very instant of his making this discovery, a lively symphony, composed of all kinds of musical instruments, was heard around him, though there was no seeing either the musicians or instruments from whence such ravishing harmony could proceed.

"Biribinquer was struck with terror, and retired trembling to some distance from the fair invisible; for his first idea was, that this noise would certainly wake the enchanter. We may easily judge then, how much greater his consternation must be,

when on looking up he beheld that Padmanaba was vanished and gone!

"The enchanter, it seems, was old enough to be prudent. He had now for a good while known how formidable to him Biribinquer would one day be; and his fear of a prince, who seemed born on purpose to break his enchantments, had been his most powerful motive for fixing his place of abode in the belly of a whale. But still, even in this asylum, he did not think that himself and his fair salamandra, who now constituted the sole object of his cares, were sufficiently secure. And as a certain foresight, or as some would say, second sight, had told him that Biribinquer might possibly follow his steps even into the whale's belly, he thought he could not use too much precaution for avoiding those evils with which the sudden appearance of so dangerous an adversary threatened him. In this view he had armed his beloved mistress with a mystical species of talisman, which had the twofold quality of rendering her invisible to all eyes but his own, and of producing a magical composition of music the moment it should be touched. For old Padmanaba reasoned with himself in this manner: 'If Biribinquer, notwithstanding every difficulty, should come into the belly of the whale, and even into this palace, yet still would the beautiful salamandra be invisible to him. And if, in spite of her very invisibility, he should find her out —this musical 'larum, at the instant he touches the talisman, will certainly betray his presence, and give Padmanaba sufficient time to prevent his dreaded catastrophe.'

"This precaution was the more necessary as the poor honest old fellow had for several years past been subject to a kind of lethargy, which obliged him to sleep and doze at least sixteen hours every day. The ill opinion he had of the fair sex, after the various tricks his former mistresses had played him, induced him every time he went to sleep, to bury the fair



salamandra in an enchanted slumber, from which none but himself could awaken her. Biribinquer alone might otherwise, upon certain conditions, and in certain circumstances, have had the same power, and Padmanaba—such was the will of fate—would at the same moment have lost all his power—at least over the beauteous salamandra. As all this then might easily have happened while the old man was taking his nap, he had applied the talisman which was to waken him with so much judgment, that Biribinquer, even if we suppose him to have had but a very moderate share of curiosity, could not absolutely fail of finding it."

Here Don Sylvio could not help interrupting the thread of Don Gabriel's narration, by begging of him to explain himself a little more clearly respecting the talisman.

"Methinks," said he, "contrary to your usual custom, you have been a little mysterious for some time, and I must confess to you, I have not understood half of what you have been saying with regard to this waking of old Padmanaba."

The whole company, not excepting even the fair Jacintha, smiled to hear a remark like this urged by Don Sylvio so very gravely; and Don Gabriel knew no other way how to extricate himself, than by observing to Don Sylvio that the whole mystery, of which he complained, was in the matter itself; and that, generally speaking, there were but few fairy tales so clear and intelligible from one end to the other, as a body might wish them to be. Don Sylvio seemed satisfied with this reply, and Don Gabriel resumed his history in the following manner:—

"The moment after, Biribinquer had discovered that the beautiful foot which occasioned this adventure belonged to so fair a lady, and instantly, upon his touching the fatal talisman, the music we have already spoken of began to strike up, and old

Padmanaba started from his sleep. He did not, as may easily be imagined, look upon the prince with the most favourable eye; but, as open force could avail him nothing against such an opponent, no other way was left him than to render himself immediately invisible, and to use all possible diligence to prevent the design which he might very well suppose the prince to have in view against him.

"The prince, who in proper time and place was not deficient in courage, had during this interval recovered from the first confusion into which the invisible concert and Padmanaba's sudden disappearance had thrown him: and dangerous as it might seem to be over-curious in such a place, he determined however to know what was become of the old sorcerer. He accordingly went in search of him through all the rooms, and pried into every hole and corner of the palace, first taking the precaution of furnishing himself with the sabre which Padmanaba had left behind him, and upon both sides of which he found so many talismanic figures engraved, that thus armed, he would not have been afraid even of the enchanter Martin himself. At last, however, being unable to trace out the old man, or whoever it was, he no longer doubted but that Padmanaba had decamped, abandoning both the palace and his fair one to his royal highness's discretion. Full of this idea, Biribinquer returned in triumph, threw the sabre upon the sofa, and himself at the feet of the lovely invisible; whom, to his great satisfaction, he found still asleep, though the music, resulting from the talisman he had touched, kept continually playing on, sometimes a fine allegro, and at others an affecting andante; pieces that in fact could not have been more exquisite, had they even been composed by Jomelli himself. We cannot pretend to specify whether it was owing to the influence of one of these andantes, or whether, as is often the case, it proceeded from any doubt that



arose in his mind, as to the sufficiency of testimony that might result from the only sense left him in this circumstance, or as to the certainty of that incomparable beauty lying on the sofa's being anything more than a mere illusion—a matter nothing extraordinary in an enchanted palace—I say, we cannot pretend to assert, whether we are to attribute, to one or other of these causes, the pains which Biribinquer took to assure himself of the truth of so unusual a phenomenon, by renewing his late investigation. However, so it was; and soon after, new and fresh experiments were superadded; and all these, as well as the most violent concomitant symptoms of a passion which presently rose to the highest pitch of enthusiasm and intoxication of the senses, no longer allowed him to doubt but that he had the beauteous salamandra within his arms; that very identical She, whose visible form, found in the apartments of the palace, had so transported him. This idea, and the enchanting glow of colours with which his memory supplied the imperfection of the fifth sense—the only one now at his command—put him too far beside himself to allow him at this juncture any recollection of his beloved milkmaid, his quondam firm resolutions, or all the pompion's grave exhortations. In a word, he became more and more enterprising; and the obscurity of the room, which gradually increased, and which he took for an encouragement to his enterprise, joined to the music of the talisman, which grew more and more tender and pathetic; all this can hardly be thought very well calculated to moderate his transports. [Here we find a small hiatus or chasm in the original of this memorable history, which therefore we must leave to the scribleruses and Bentleys of the age to fill up, not caring to hazard a single conjecture of our own upon what its contents might be.]

"Biribinquer, continues the historian, was just emerging from one of those ecstasies, which, to some

of the Indian philosophers, appear so delectable and charming, that in the continual duration of such raptures they have inclined to place the highest degree of felicity—when lo! he perceived that the fair invisible answered his caresses with becoming sensibility. He judged from thence she must now be awake, and therefore failed not to tell her, in that sublime language to which he had been used in the fairy Melisotta's beehive, the same sweet things which Crystallina and Mirabella had heard from him before on a like occasion. The invisible fair one answered to all these fine declamations, eulogiums, exclamations, protestations, and so forth, only by sighs; she modestly depreciated her own charms, and seemed to doubt of the prince's constancy, but in such a manner, that a lover less enthusiastic than Biribinquer might have thought the declaration misplaced in the mouth of so lovely a person. The prince, however, who was not then in a mood for verbal argumentation, contented himself with simply redoubling his caresses, the common method of removing these sorts of doubts. She paid all possible attention to his reasonings, without seeming a whit more convinced than before.

"'Have you not loved Mirabella and Crystallina as much as me?' said she. 'Did not you tell both of them the same passionate and tender things? Did not you make them as many protestations, and did you not give them the same proofs? yet neither of them, charming as they appeared to you in the first intoxication of your senses, was capable of stealing you a single day from the milkmaid, whom you had taken it into your head to run after? Ah! Biribinquer, the fate of these my predecessors does but too plainly tell me what mine will be, and how think you then that I can rest easy or satisfied, under the irksome uncertainty of losing you, like them, in a few short hours?'

"Biribinquer replied, by giving her the strongest



and most solemn assurances of a lasting and unbounded love. He insisted upon it, that she debased her own figure and accomplishments, by comparing herself with two fairies, who, as he observed, were not sufficiently lovely to inspire him with more than a transient liking; and by all the cupids he swore to her, that from the first moment of his being so lucky as to behold her portrait in the great saloon, the milkmaid who gave her so much uneasiness, had retained no more empire over him than any other milkmaid in the world. This assurance did but weakly soothe the apprehensions of the fair invisible, and Biribinquer found himself obliged to exhaust all his rhetoric in order to overcome her obstinate incredulity.

"'O beautiful invisible,' he cried, 'why cannot I call the whole earth and all the elements with their inhabitants to witness, when I swear to you the most inviolable fidelity.'

"'We are all of us witnesses,' exclaimed a vast number of voices, male and female, that came from persons on all sides round him.

"Biribinquer, who, to say the truth, could never have thought of being thus taken at his word, rose up with some confusion, to see from whence these voices proceeded. But, O Heavens! what tongue is sufficiently eloquent to express the trouble and horror he felt at seeing the whole apartment all on a sudden blazing with light around him? In the very cabinet which had borne witness to his inconstancy and infidelity, he beheld — O wonderful, terrible sight! — instead of the beautiful salamandra, he beheld himself locked in the arms of that very deformed gnomida to whom he had so lately adjudged the prize of beauty. But what above all completed his confusion and distress, was to see himself surrounded on every side by he's and she's, whom of all living he would last have chosen to be spectators of his present state. These persons were cruel enough

to burst out into immoderate fits of laughing, at the very moment he was disengaging himself from his monstrous fair one. He was ready to sink into the earth, what with shame on one hand, and aversion on the other, while the whole palace rung with unbounded laughter from every busy spectator. On the right side of the sofa he saw—oh, how at that instant could he have wished for blindness and invisibility!—he saw the fairy Crystallina, holding in her hand little Grigri; on the left side appeared the charming Mirabella with her dear Flox, who now cut a far better figure as salamander than in his late condition of a big-bellied pompion. But what above all added torture in extreme to the unhappy Biribinquer, was to behold the fairy Caprosina, with his beautiful milkmaid, and close beside them, old Padmanaba, holding the fair salamandra in his hand, both seated upon a cloud intermixed with azure and gold, borne by young sylphs, and casting disdainful looks at him!

"'Oh, mighty well! Prince Biribinquer,' cried the fairy Crystallina; 'upon my word, prince, I pardon you now for the impatience you showed to get rid of me. He who goes in pursuit of such a conquest, certainly cannot exercise too much diligence to obtain it.'

"'And, Prince Biribinquer,' cried Grigri, taking up the conversation, 'I suppose you may now recollect, that I am not under any particular obligation to suppose myself greatly indebted to your care: for had it only depended upon you, I fancy I might have continued a bee as I was for ever; but in your present situation it would really be cruel to laugh at you. Only then look upon what has befallen you as a punishment you have well deserved for more reasons than one; and so good-bye to you!'

"'If the fair one with whom you have so unexpectedly been surprised,' said Mirabella with a malicious air, 'were not in all respects worthy of your



attention, you have at least the satisfaction of finding her neither prudish nor formal.'

" ' As to myself,' cried he that had been the pompion, ' I ought indeed to be mortified for having recovered, at the expense of your happiness, my natural shape, and the possession of my dear Mirabella; but having so generously warned you beforehand of the consequences of a fresh infidelity, while I was but a poor pompion, you will not blame me if I rejoice as a salamander to see you punished for the contempt of my precautions.'

" ' See now, unhappy, but justly punished Biribinquer,' exclaimed the fairy Caprosina, with a hoarse dissonant eagerness of voice, ' see how Caramussal has guarded thee against my anger and resentments! Look here, and behold the amiable Galactina, whom thou lovedst as a milkmaid, and of whom, in spite of my hatred towards thee, a too favourable fate had destined thee the sole possession, had not thy own thrice perpetrated infidelity rendered thee unworthy of her.'

" ' Little as thou hast merited it at my hands, poor prince! ' said the beauteous milkmaid, ' if my compassion could avail thee anything, thou shouldst be less unhappy: for full well I see, the punishment thou hast been made to suffer is greater even than thy crime; nay, I verily believe that the fairies and enchanters have at least had as great a share in thy disaster as any to which thy own faultiness hath contributed.'

" At these words Biribinquer lifted up his eyes, and darted a look full of inexpressible sensibilities at his best-beloved milkmaid: then, sinking to the ground, he heaved a great sigh that seemed as if life and soul fled with it, and lay prostrate without power to utter a single word.

" ' Learn, admirable Biribinquer,' cried old Padmanaba, standing on the other side of him; ' learn, thou rare pattern of wisdom and constancy, and

from hence be convinced that Padmanaba is not yet so old as to let thy temerity escape unpunished. Let thy history, through successive and uncounted ages, be transmitted to the latest posterity, from gossip to gossip, from one old wife to another; that so they may learn how equally dangerous it is for any one to consult the great Caramussal about fates or fortunes, or to look upon a milkmaid before the expiration of his eighteenth year.'

"'Padmanaba had scarce done speaking, when all on a sudden were heard terrible claps of thunder, accompanied with streams of lightning, and such a furious tempest, that the whole palace shook with its violent concussions, just as if an earthquake were rooting up the very foundations. Every one present, excepting only the despairing Biribinquer, was struck with fear and horror; and even old Padmanaba himself perceived that the storm proceeded from a power superior to his own. In an instant the roofs of the palace, with the ceiling of the room above them, were all torn off, while, amidst the thunders and lightnings, they beheld the great Caramussal mounted on a hippogriff, and descending from the clouds. He alighted, and took his place betwixt old Padmanaba and the fairy Caprosina.

"'The Prince Biribinquer,' cried Caramussal with a majestic voice, 'is sufficiently punished. Fate is satisfied, and I take him under my protection. Vanish, unworthy strumpet!' continued he, touching the gnomida with his wand; 'and now, Prince Biribinquer, choose you out from amongst these four fair females—the salamandra, the sylphid, the undina, or the mortal—whichever you best approve. She whom your own heart shall fix upon, shall be your wife, and cure you of that inconstancy, which hitherto, it must be owned, has been your fault.'

"Had Padmanaba had any, he could have gnashed his teeth for spite, at seeing the whole plot of the drama so unexpectedly unravelled. As to the fair



ones, they all together kept their eyes fixed upon the prince; and you might particularly read in those of the young salamandra, who hitherto had not uttered a single word, that rather than old Padmanaba should have substituted the ugly gnomida in her stead, she could have gladly been permitted to represent her own self *in propriâ personâ*. But Biribinquer, who in a moment passed from one extreme to another—that is to say, from the greatest grief and deepest despair, to the highest festivity and joy, did not hesitate a minute where to choose; though the elementary ladies infinitely surpassed his milkmaid in beauty, all their charms could not, however, obtain from him more than a transient regard when he considered his dearest Galactina. He threw himself at the feet of that charming young creature, and implored her pardon for all his faults, in terms full of a sincere penitence, and a love so violent, that, unable to call up cruelty enough not to flatter him at least with hope, she at length suffered herself to be moved by his entreaties. Caramussal, at whose feet also in like manner he laid himself prostrate, raised him from the ground, took him by the hand, and led him towards the princess Galactina.

"'Receive,' said he, 'from my hands, the Prince Cacamiello, for since the views, with which I had the other appellation bestowed upon him, are fulfilled, this is his present name. Biribinquer and the milkmaid now no longer exist. Both of them therefore having satisfied the caprice of their stars, and paid their tribute to the fairy science, nothing more remains to do, than to restore Prince Cacamiello to his royal parents, and bind him by an indissoluble tie to the Princess Galactina. You, bright fairies!' continued he, turning toward Crystallina and Mirabella, 'you, I hope, have reason to be content with my proceedings; having your former shape, together with your lovers, restored to you by my care. But, as it would be unjust that I should be the only one to

return back empty-handed, I here dispense old Padmanaba from every care whatever, and shall keep for myself the beautiful salamandra, whose residence with him could leave her no other employment than to sleep, and to be invisible.'

"So saying, the great Caramussal smote the air thrice with his wand, and instantly found himself with the prince and princess in the king's cabinet; who, as may well be imagined, was full of joy to behold once more his son and heir, accompanied with so beautiful a princess, and with so fine a name. Soon after, the nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and ceremony. The new-married couple loved each other as long as they could, enriching the world with sons and daughters, and at length, on the old king's departure for the nineteenth world, King Cacamiello governed so wisely in his stead, that the subjects under his sway found little or no difference betwixt the father and son. In reward for the good services which his friend Flox, while a pompion, had rendered him, he made him his prime vizier, nor did the fairy Crystallina or Mirabella ever fail of appearing at court as often as the queen lay in. Crystallina always brought with her the little Grigri, who, in spite of his ugliness, met with the approbation of most of the maids of honour; a circumstance by no means palatable to their respective admirers. 'It must be owned,' said all the ladies with a unanimous voice, 'that Grigri, in spite of his ugliness, is the most diverting companion in the world!'

"Here then, at length," said Don Gabriel, "concludes the history of Prince Biribinquer, which is equally as true as it is instructive. Happy shall I esteem myself, if I have succeeded in my undertaking, which was at once to amuse you, and to cure the fair Jacintha of her prejudices against the fairies and fairy science."



CHAPTER III

REMARKS ON THE FOREGOING HISTORY

"IF you had no other design but that, Don Gabriel," said Jacintha, "I am only sorry to find you have so ill succeeded. To tell you the truth, I believe it is impossible to push the matter of impertinence and extravagant folly further in a tale than you have done: and certainly Don Sylvio must have been very credulous and honest-hearted if he has not perceived that your sole view was to put the fairies out of all credit or countenance with him."

"You judge very rigorously, madam," replied Don Eugenio: "'tis true, all nature is turned topsy-turvy in this history from one end to the other: 'tis equally true, that the characters which it exhibits are as impertinent as the adventures it relates are incredible; and that if we were to judge of either according to the principles of reason, probability, and morality, nothing could be invented more out-of-the way, or more absurd. But then, in so doing, we might exercise as little justice, as if we should choose to determine the climate of Siberia from that of Valencia, or our country politeness from that of the Chinese. The land of the fairies is situated beyond the confines of nature; it is governed by its own laws, or, to speak more accurately, like certain republics which I don't choose to name, it is governed by no laws at all. There is no judging of one fairy tale but by another fairy tale; and considered in this point of view, Biribinquer is not only as probable and as instructive, but in all respects more

interesting than any other tale in the world, excepting the history of the four Facardins."

"But pray now," demanded Jacintha, "I could be glad to know what you find so instructive in this tale."

"Moralists by profession," replied Don Eugenio, "persons who are capable of extracting a whole system of morality from one of Tibullus's elegies, would undoubtedly give you a better answer to this question than I. However, not entirely to give my position, do tell me, are not irregularity and a vicious conduct constantly and uniformly punished in this history? Is not virtue at length rewarded in the person of the fair milkmaid, and does not the whole tale very convincingly make good the moral maxim, 'That the foolish curiosity of wishing to pry into futurity, with a purpose of extricating ourselves from the lot assigned us, is equally imprudent and dangerous?' If the big-bellied king had not consulted the great Caramussal, we should never have known it was dangerous for the prince to look at a milkmaid till he was eighteen years of age; and, by the same rule, he could never have received the name of Biribinquer. He might have been brought up in his father's court as other princes are, and when it had been time for him to marry, his parents might have demanded by their ambassadors the Princess Galactina; and thus everything would have come about in the natural course of things. Now the curiosity of the king, and the fatal oracle of the great Caramussal, were the alone cause of all his disasters. The means made use of to hinder the prince from seeing any milkmaid, were precisely what facilitated their union; not to say that the name Biribinquer, which in fact constantly extricated him out of every difficulty, could have been of no use or avail, because the prince would never have engaged in such adventures as he did, had he never been so called."

"You are perfectly in the right," said Donna



Felicia; "but herein you observe, consists the greatest beauty of the narrative; or to speak more properly, if this single circumstance had been taken away, the whole history of Prince Biribinquer, instead of being one of the drollest fairy tales in the world, would have become merely one of those dull common stories, which at best are only fit to make a newspaper paragraph, or a 'history of my own times;' and that would have been a great pity. In short, whether it be trifling or impertinent, or not, I take the Prince Biribinquer under my protection; and had I but the honour of wearing a hat and sword, I would maintain it against all opponents, that the love of Prince Biribinquer, the virtue of the lady Crystallina, the delicacy of Mirabella, her habits of dry water, and distractions of mind; that the giant Caraculiamborix, the ostrich's egg, and pea-shells; the whale with the lakes, isles, and enchanted structures it contains within its belly; the palace of compacted fire, the pompion that talks so fluently, and knows the course of the stars so well, together with all the other marvellous and unexpected circumstances that swarm in this tale, do make it the most comical story of all stories that ever I heard in my days."

"You have forgot," said Jacintha, "the carp which sung such fine operas airs, the rope-dancing dog, and those fiery glances of Biribinquer's eye that melted the pebbles of the rivulet into glass."

"Permit me moreover to add," said Don Gabriel, "you will hardly meet with any tale more abundantly rich in materials of the most precious and costly kinds. For certain I am, that in no cabinet of curiosities throughout Europe will you meet with a milk-pail composed of rubies; nor do I know of any enchanted garden, where the fountains and water basins are set round with large cut diamonds."

Hitherto Don Sylvio had listened with great attention to all that had been said; but observing that

each of the company had delivered his or her sentiment, and that they were waiting for his own opinion, he addressed them very gravely thus :—

"I must own to you I could either have wished Prince Biribinquer had been more faithful to his milkmaid, who really must have been a very amiable young creature, or else I could have been glad to have seen him more severely chastised for his irregular conduct. But, excepting this single circumstance, together with the characters and deportment of some other personages in the history, which never can be approved of—I do not see what there is in the whole history of this prince, either impertinent, impossible, or contrary to nature."

"How! Don Sylvio," said Jacintha; "and do you suppose all those marvellous things about the giant's picking his teeth with a great hedge-stake, the whale's throwing from his nostrils deluges of water for fifty leagues round, the soft rocks, the singing fishes, and talking pompions; pray do you suppose all this natural and possible?"

"Undoubtedly, beautiful Jacintha!" replied Don Sylvio; "unless we choose to measure what is possible to nature by that infinitely small portion of nature that lies before our immediate sight, or by what we see happen every day we live. 'Tis true, Caraculiamborix is a monster in comparison with common men; but he becomes a pigmy compared with an inhabitant of Saturn, whose size, as a great astronomer informs us, we are to measure and reckon by leagues. And why might there not be a whale large enough to contain lakes and islands within its belly, since there are little insects in water, compared with which, a common-sized Greenland whale is at least as huge and bulky, as the whale in question is in comparison with a Greenland whale."

"Oh, as to the whale," interrupted Don Gabriel, "its possibility cannot be disputed, since in all likelihood it is the same with that which Lucian so



circumstantially describes in his authentic histories, and in which he discovered a wide country, that was then inhabited by five or six different nations, who were continually at war with each other. So that probably at the time when Padmanaba erected his palace in the whale's belly, these hostile nations might have utterly extirpated one another. The only thing that can render this affair incredible, seems to be that Biribinquer is said to have seen there a sun, moon, and stars."

"As to that," said Don Sylvio, "I do not apprehend it means that a sun, or moon, or stars really held their course in the whale's belly, but only that it seemed so to the prince; and such an illusion Padmanaba by his art might very easily have effected. That sun and those stars, for instance, might be so many salamanders stationed by Padmanaba to shine at certain distances, to form a kind of sphere, and observe a regular course of rotation, and indeed there are certain circumstances which make me incline to think that the thing was so."

"I should be mighty glad," said Jacintha, "to know what Don Sylvio calls impossible! for at his rate of extending the bounds of possibility, I suppose everything a person could imagine in the delirium of a raging fever might be possible. If there be such things as compacted fire and dry water, there must equally be supposed golden lead, or a square circle."

"Pardon me, fair Jacintha," replied Don Sylvio, "this agument is not so substantial as you may think it. Rotundity or roundness makes the essence of a circle, and therefore it is impossible to conceive a square circle. But how could you prove fluidity to be an essential quality of water and fire? Don't we every winter see ice, which is nothing more than solid compacted water: then why might not the power or art of elementary genii produce dry water or compacted fire? I apprehend," continued he, "that

the true source of those erroneous judgments which are commonly passed upon every wonderful event, springs from this false presumption, that whatever cannot be explained by causes corporeal and palpable to the senses, is impossible; as if the powers of spirits, to which corporeal things are but the merely gross unanimated tools and instruments, must not necessarily and infinitely surpass the mechanical and borrowed powers of those same instruments. Upon this footing, I am firmly persuaded that many things are held impossible, only because they are incomprehensible to our ignorance; and is not this being pretty nearly as rash as the savage would be, who should fancy the enchanted modulation of sounds drawn by a virtuoso through the stops of his German flute, to be impossible, merely because he himself can get nothing out of his calumet, or pipe of straw but hoarse, dissonant, and inharmonious tones? Upon the whole then, I find nothing impossible in the history of Prince Biribinquer, and, taking for granted the historian's authenticity, I do not see why it might not be as real, as genuine, and as worthy of credit as any other history whatever."

"Ay, now you are come to the very point," said Don Gabriel. "Everything depends upon the authenticity of witnesses; for, though we might grant a conditional possibility to all those wonderful things with which historians and poets have filled the world, or at least to the major part of what they have said; yet are all these things, notwithstanding, only mere chimeras, till our reason can have proof incontestable laid before it, that they do exist, or that they really have existed: but till then, I must confess to you, the cause of historical truth, as it respects fairy tales and stories about spirits, is in no small danger, unless you can produce better vouchers for their veracity than the Prince Biribinquer."

"But pray, why so?" demanded Don Sylvio hastily.



"Because," replied Don Gabriel, "this whole history is of my own invention."

"Of *your invention*!" cried the other, not a little thunderstruck. "Ah! Don Gabriel, I could not have expected such an artificial trick from you. But, prithee now, did not you mention the name of a historian from whom you told us you had taken the whole?"

"Pardon me, Don Sylvio," said Don Gabriel, "the matter is such as I have informed you. I wanted to see how far you would carry your prepossessions in favour of fairy science, and therefore used my utmost endeavours, saving your presence, to invent a story so extravagantly out of the way, so marvellously impertinent, and so contradictory, as that you have just been hearing: and this is the sole origin of Prince Biribinquer. But at the same time I must as freely confess to you, that it was not possible for me to invent anything so absurd, but what the like has already been said in other fairy tales, and I might easily have foreseen that this analogy would delude you. Believe me, Don Sylvio, the authors of fairy tales and most of such marvellous stories, had as little intention to impose them upon people of sense, as I myself have had. They had nothing more in view than to amuse the imagination; and for my own part, I must own to you, I am fonder of such tales than of any systems of metaphysics. I know that both among the ancients and moderns, there are persons of great merit who have diverted themselves at their leisure hours in writing tales—and many people far superior to myself—persons who supported the gravity of their character better than ever I shall do, have preferred these toys of fancy to any other works of genius. Who, for instance, does not like Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which yet in fact is but a long string of fairy tales? I could say much more in their favour, if I were now professedly called upon to draw up an apology for them. But, however,

all this does not prevent tales from being only tales, and though the salamanders, sylphids, fairies, and cabalists afford us a deal of pleasure, when the materials are worked up by the hand of an ingenious poet, yet certain it is, they are at best but merely chimerical beings, for whose reality no better reason or argument can be urged, than I should be capable of urging in behalf of Prince Biribinquer."

"Sir," said Don Sylvio, "you seem not to consider that there is no denying the existence of fairies and elementary spirits; of the cabala, or that occult philosophy, which gives to sages the power of subjecting those spirits to their control, without overturning the basis of all historical faith. For, is not all history in general unanimously in their favour?"

"Possibly," replied Don Gabriel, "you may have read the history of the Count de Gabalis, in which this argument is pushed to the highest degree of probability of which it is capable. But all that can possibly arise in proof from thence would be, that history is mixed up with fables and falsehoods; and this is an evil which we ought entirely to impute to the feeble understanding, the sinister views, or at least the vanity of historians; which, in my mind, is the true source of those many pernicious errors with which we see whole societies contaminated. Do you suppose that Biribinquer's history, for example, would be a halfpenny worth more credible, if it were related word for word by the historian Palæphatus? How should we be able to know, whether an author, who existed three thousand years ago, and whose history no less than his character is equally unknown to us, had even a wish or desire to tell us the truth? and supposing he had, might he not be a very credulous creature himself? Might he not have set himself to work upon very vile materials? and might he not have been egregiously deceived either by his own prejudices, or by false intelligence? Or, even supposing him personally clear from all



this, yet may not his history, written two or three thousand years ago—what by lapse of time, or the negligence of transcribers—have been altered, interpolated, or enlarged by suppositious emendations? So long then as we are not capable of proving that in every adventure of Biribinquer, and, as it were, in every page, any one of these possible cases might happen, even Herodotus himself could not be a sufficient voucher for the truth of this pretended history. I own to you, the testimony of a Tacitus or a Hume * might be of great authority for the existence of elementary spirits, or for anything else not to be met within the known beaten circle of human science. But unhappily for the marvellous, they cannot boast themselves of so respectable and weighty a testimony: and put the case, that amongst the infinite number of wonders of this sort, which from the creation of the world have reached by tradition all nations of the earth from generation to generation, and been partly believed by them; I say, putting the case that any one amongst all these should be found to have incontestable authority on its side; these, notwithstanding, could render the rest not a whit more credible, nor weaken the force of this general principle. So that whatever is not analogous to the ordinary course of nature, according to the conception which our senses are capacitated to form of it, nor analogous to the daily experience of the generality of mankind, has for this reason a very strong and almost invincible presumption of falsehood against it. This is one of those principles which the universal sentiment of mankind fully justifies—though, by the way, it absolutely annihilates the existence of fairies and all that belongs to them."

* The reader will observe a pretty sizeable anachronism in this place; which, unfortunately, is not the only one in the course of the work, and which possibly might excite doubts respecting the authenticity of this whole history. We therefore leave it with the critics either to remove the stumbling-block, or to trim and idealise it just as they please.

The ladies had retired the moment they observed that the conversation was taking a scientific turn. Don Sylvio did not come to so easily as his adversary at first imagined he would. He availed himself of every advantage that the apparent connection between this matter and others—on which Don Gabriel, after the manner of the hussars, could only fight him flying—seemed to lay in his way. But after seeing himself forced into his last entrenchments, by the skill of his antagonist, all that he had left him to do was to appeal in his turn to those self-experiences by which the other had thought to convince him. Don Sylvio, however, soon found he should gain but little by fighting with such a philosopher as Don Gabriel, at his own weapons; who proved to him, that particular and extraordinary experiences, whenever they contradict the general experience, are always to be suspected; and that in order to constitute such an evidence as should oblige reason to yield, it required arguments so cogent, that amidst a thousand such private and extraordinary experiences, there is hardly one to be found, which, upon a close examination, can keep even so much appearance of probability as was necessary to ground a strong presumption. The better to explain his axioms, he took for an example the visions of sister Mary d'Agreda, and insensibly sheathed himself so deep in speculations, that the translator really thought them too profound for most readers of this present writing. He has therefore retrenched them here, and the more willingly from seeing by the preface at the head of the Spanish manuscript, that the Reverend Father Dominican, to whose criticism the book was committed, took occasion from this innocent discourse to interdict the printing of the whole work. Be that as it may, Don Eugenio himself thought good to put a stop to these metaphysical researches.

"Upon my word," said he, "I am almost inclined



to think, that if you wish to prove how far in these cases prepossession, or a too active imagination, may deceive us, you have nothing more to do than refer us to Don Sylvio's own personal experience. Now I will venture any wager you please, Don Sylvio, that upon entering these gardens, and on seeing these pavilions, you thought you had got into some abode or other belonging to the fairies; and yet most certain it is, that you are in no other individual spot than the village of Lirias, for which my grandfather, Gil Blas de Santillane, is indebted to the grateful generosity of Don Alphonso de Leyva; and the enlargements and decorations that have been made in it, are partly his, and partly my father's, Don Felix de Lirias. You seem, my dear Don Sylvio, to have seen so little of the real world, that the resemblance betwixt the gardens and buildings of Lirias, and those which your imagination has picked up an acquaintance with in fairy tales, might easily induce you to take that for a production of genii and fairies, which is no other than the workmanship of very common and ordinary men. Do now, tell me ingenuously, Don Sylvio, did not you, on seeing my sister, hesitate a moment about taking her for a fairy? and yet my chaplain shall prove to you by his register of baptisms, that she is no more than a mortal descended from good old Christians, who were never in their lifetimes suspected of magic or sorcery. He shall also prove to you, that she is really the grand-daughter of the lovely Dorothea de Jutella, destined to supply the place of my grandfather's dear Antonia, whom he had lost; and between which said Dorothea and my said sister, there is so striking a resemblance that the portrait of the one might easily be taken for the portrait of the other."

This induction of particulars alone had more effect than all Don Gabriel's arguments. Don Sylvio, excepting a small compliment he paid upon the occasion

to Donna Felicia's charms, found so little room for a reply, that by degrees he became very silent; but it was only because he was sunk into a profound reverie, which rendered him totally giddy, stupid, and insensible to everything about him. Luckily it was now time to go to a comedy which Don Eugenio had ordered a small company of strolling players to represent, whom he had retained at his house for some few weeks past. This agreeable diversion of thought, and the presence of Donna Felicia, which he enjoyed the whole evening, restored our hero by degrees to his usual good-temper: the politeness of so fair a young creature, or, to speak more properly, the tenderness which reigned in all her actions, presently animated Don Sylvio's spirits into vivacity, gave him eloquence, and led him to exert his utmost endeavours to please and to be pleased. In a word, that tone of gaiety, sprightliness, and great good-humour which Donna Felicia very assiduously imparted to the whole company, particularly at supper time, operated so powerfully upon our hero, that he insensibly forgot the character he had undertaken to represent; laughed as heartily at Prince Biribinquer, and as perfectly despised all the fairies as if he had never believed in their existence, nor had ever been in love with a blue butterfly.

BOOK VII

CHAPTER I

A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY. SINGULAR DISCRETION OF PEDRILLO

OUR Spanish author begins this book with a sort of apology, which he addresses to such of his readers as may possibly have been dissatisfied with his conduct; because truly, from the moment of Donna Felicia's and Don Sylvio's so unexpectedly meeting in one of the pavilions at Lirias, honest Pedrillo has been so totally neglected, and not suffered once to make his appearance, and divert both the company and reader with his laughable sallies.

"We apprehend," says the author, "that it is a great defect in a dramatical piece, when the poet who hath undertaken to conduct the characters, passions, virtues or follies of his personages through a labyrinth of complicated incidents to the end proposed, instead of giving his whole attention to those personages, is every moment turning to the spectators for whom he writes, and putting them in mind of what is doing. This is sometimes carried so far, that the writer is often obliged to make up for the lame disposition of his plan, and poor contrivance of the catastrophe, by throwing in an *ad spectatores* addressed to the audience by one or other of the performers. Now such a history as ours seems to be pretty much under the same predicament. Indeed, if Pedrillo, like Punchinello in certain comedies, was placed there only to make the readers laugh, it might

with justice be laid to our charge that we have let slip more occasions than one, in which he might have answered his destination, by amusing his partisans. But Pedrillo, as the reader must long since have observed, has a part much more important to perform; and even if, by making him appear in this history, our design had been partly to amuse our readers with his drollery, yet certainly, this could only have been as an underplot, or, to express ourselves more learnedly, a *finis secundarius;* which, as every one knows, ought always to give place to the principal end in view, where there is not room sufficient left for both together. Hence it is, that Pedrillo comes or goes, chatters away or holds his tongue, is busied or idle, or even invisible if need be, according to the nature of the service he can do, or as the relation between him and his master requires. While accompanying the latter on his wonderful expedition, he was in the right to talk away when and how he pleased, Don Sylvio having no better company to amuse him: but the moment his master meets with more respectable society, he retires either to the footmen's hall, or the fair Laura's apartment. It is true, some might object to us the example of Sancho Pança, who, in the castle where his master, in spite of his enemies the enchanters and Moors, was so well received, continually made one of the company, had free passage everywhere, and even enjoyed more than once the honour of talking with my lady duchess face to face. But the reader will be kind enough to remember, that the business there was to make the ceremonious folly of the knight, and the shrewd simplicity of the squire, serve equally as matter of diversion. Here, on the contrary, in the seat at Lirias, the main point is how to cure our hero as soon as possible of this enchantment of his brain, without giving ourselves any great concern to inquire whether our dear readers, who perhaps might rather choose to see him in his state of madness, are



gainers or losers by so important a change in his intellects.

However, that we may not be reproached with having ungratefully rejected honest Pedrillo when we had no longer any need of him, we have appropriated a portion of this chapter, on purpose to inform his admirers, in few words, how this gallant youth passed his spare time after his arrival at Lirias.

The reader probably will remember, that the first time the agreeable Laura appeared to Pedrillo in the form of a sylphid, she had carried off his heart, though the poor young fellow hardly knew how. It must be confessed that for a lover who found himself seized with the first fervours of a growing passion, the distraction of mind into which Mrs Teresilla threw him the same evening, was pretty violent. But in this respect Pedrillo was a second Biribinquer. He was never once unfaithful to his mistress but when opportunity offered. Every fresh infidelity served only to rekindle his love so much the more ardently towards her, and he had nothing more to do than to see the real sovereign mistress of his heart—and presently he forgot every other that had before been capable of pleasing him. Such being the state of things, nobody will wonder to hear that it required but little trouble to keep this faithful valet at a distance from his master for two or three days. Laura, who had her mistress's orders for that purpose, found the execution of those orders easier, as Pedrillo was so intoxicated with the pleasure of seeing and toying with her, that perhaps he would not have thought of Don Sylvio during a longer space of time, had not the sylphid herself first put him in mind of it.

The tender passion, with which Pedrillo had been so happy as to inspire this young nymph, induced her to avoid no opportunities of being alone with him, whenever it could be done without noise, or her absence being perceived. Accordingly it so happened, that the next morning after his arrival they

met in a very shady thicket, which lay at the lower end of the labyrinth, precisely at the same time when the ladies and gentlemen were in conversation together in one of the pavilions belonging to the garden. The rest of the domestics were now taking their afternoon's nap. The gentle couple, as I said, met there, without any mutual previous appointment; whether it was by chance only, or through the effect of that magnetic power and virtue already mentioned elsewhere. The intention of both was to take their siesta; but meeting here, as unexpectedly as Dido and the Trojan hero met in a cave in times of old, nothing could be more natural than to sit down and chatter away instead of wasting the hours in sleep. Heat does not produce the same effect upon all men: for, though the naturalists inform us that any great degree of it dissipates the vital spirits, and relaxes the fibres, Pedrillo, for his part, never found himself in a disposition more calculated to form a dangerous lover than on the present occasion. Laura soon perceived it; and as, contrary to the custom of Spanish chamber-maids, she was neither wanton nor a prude, she found herself obliged to give him to understand, that if a lover wished to convince her of his passion for her, it must be by great discretion and much decorum. In consequence of this rebuff, Pedrillo's fear of having offended her presently effected what the heat might otherwise have done according to the system of the naturalists. He became as timid and as submissive as the humblest adorer of the Queen of the Crystal Islands, promising her that if she would not banish him from her presence, he would be as gentle and innocent as a lamb. Upon these conditions Laura consented to keep her seat beside him, but at the same time wanted to divert him from that great attention which he continually paid to her charms. She accordingly turned the discourse so variously, and plied him with so many questions, that at length she got him to



relate very circumstantially, everything he knew himself of his young master's history. Consequently, she learned from him the story of the enchanted princess's portrait; and from the description he gave of it, presently discerned that it was the very trinket which her mistress had lost but a few days before, in walking to her little arcadia before-mentioned. She imparted her thoughts to Pedrillo, and from the account he gave her of the manner in which it had been taken from Don Sylvio, determined to set off immediately with her new friend to see if they could not recover it. They had no doubt of finding the trinket in the custody of one of the peasant girls that worked in the neighbourhood near the seat; and by great good luck, their supposition proved just. The trinket was restored, in exchange for a few maravedis, and delivered the same evening into the hands of Donna Felicia; to whom—though it was of great value—the hints and counsel which Laura communicated with it, as she had drawn them from Pedrillo's mouth, gave far more pleasure than the recovery of the toy itself. For now she thought she had such a talisman in her own power, as might well effect the disenchantment of her dear Don Sylvio de Rosalva—an event which she determined not to defer longer than till the next morning.

In the meantime, Laura, the sovereign mistress of Pedrillo's heart, very strictly forbade him to reveal anything of the matter to his master. This prohibition, however, only served to make honest Pedrillo so very impatient, that he had the utmost difficulty in the world to wait for an opportunity of justifying the old remark, "That there cannot be a surer means of making people say indiscreet things, than to forbid them to talk." The opportunity offered itself next morning: both master and man were too much in love to allow any great portion of time for sleeping. Pedrillo perceived Don Sylvio at daybreak walking in the garden, and buried in

profound cogitations. He therefore slipped softly out of his chamber, and unobserved by the fair Laura, went to meet his master.

Don Sylvio had spent a good part of the night in a train of reflections not very favourable to the fairies. To say the truth, ever since the little trick which Don Gabriel had played him with the tale of Prince Biribinquer, the faith he had hitherto reposed in those ladies and their historians had suffered a considerable alteration. The history of Biribinquer really seemed to him so silly and so vapid, that he could not conceive how it was possible for him not to have instantly discerned the cheat. At last he found there could be no other reason for it than the resemblance between this and other tales of the sort, joined to the favourable prepossession which he had always indulged of the truth of such narrations: nor could he conceal it from himself, that if inconsistency and folly were carried further in the tale of Biribinquer, than in other fairy tales, yet the analogy between this and the rest was still sufficiently great, in his opinion, to render all other tales of the fairies without exception doubtful; especially too, when he reflected upon all that Don Gabriel and Don Eugenio had urged against them.

In the midst of these reflections he at length fell asleep; and after having slept about three hours, during which he had dreamt of nothing but Donna Felicia, he arose, to pursue with greater success his reflections on an affair of such importance; to which the freshness of the morning and the charms of a solitary walk powerfully invited him.

Pedrillo looked about a good while before he could find his master; for while he dressed himself and was coming down, Don Sylvio had got into the winding allies of the labyrinth, which was one of the most agreeable spots in the world, both on account of its large extent, and the variety of walks, thickets, groves, cascades, Grecian temples, pagodas, statues,



and so forth, which were all well adapted to give it the air of one of those enchanted gardens described in romances. Our hero, who could no longer doubt but that all this, though strongly resembling an enchanted country, was yet only a work of art, which, conducted by a poetical imagination, skilfully uniting the various elegancies of nature with the arts which imitated nature, had produced so pleasing an assemblage of beauties; our hero I say, on entering this agreeably sylvan scene, could not help reflecting that possibly imagination was the only and real mother of that marvellous, which hitherto, from a want of experience, he had taken for a part of nature itself. He had now for some time pursued this idea with that pleasure which minds of a lively turn naturally feel on tracing out a new discovery; when on a sudden he perceived Pedrillo, who, starting from behind some bushes of wild laurel that surrounded the ruins of an antique temple, came running up to him with great joy.

"Ha! good-day t'ye, Signior Don Sylvio," cried he at a distance, the instant he discovered him. "What, are you still alive! Peascods take it, signior, one can't get the sight of you a moment in the whole day. If I had not picked up from Mrs Laura that you were still here, I should have supposed, God forgive me, that the fairies had made a set-off with you through the air."

"Well, but methinks I have most reason of the two to complain," replied Don Sylvio, smiling; "surely thou must have been vastly enchanted with the sylphid, for I have not once set eyes upon thee since the moment of thy quitting the hall, on perceiving Donna Felicia enter it."

"Signior," said Pedrillo, "I believe you guess it pretty right, when you believe me to be enchanted. Some folks tell us that people enchanted neither eat nor drink, without getting half an ounce the leaner for it; and may I be hanged—but round my mistress's

neck only, understood — if I have ate a crumb more since the day before yesterday, than what a fly could carry away upon its wings. Now do but mind; when we come to table, I am always seated directly over against Mrs Laura; and there I somehow can't help looking at her continually; sometimes this way, so; and then again so; and then I see how pretty she eats, and look in her little mouth; for she has such a row of teeth, that it is quite a charm to see how white and how well set they be, just like a string of pearls. And then—but what was it I was saying? Oh, so then she keeps teasing of me every minute almost, and makes signs, and winks and nods at me, or treads upon my toe, or else puts her handkerchief to rights; so that what with one thing, and what with another, i' faith, I should forget to eat or drink either, if she herself did not now and then put some little tid-bit or other to my mouth. And yet, as you see, signior, I am as gay and as brisk as if great Bel of Babylon and I had been at a feast together, and tried who should hold it out longest.* Well! this is to keep good company! But, deuce is in't, signior, you don't seem to want anything any more than myself: you are as fresh, and you have so fine a colour, that one might take you for a bridegroom: and yet I could lay a small wager, you slept but a very little last night?"

"True," answered Don Sylvio, "'tis as thou sayest, all the effect of good company. But how dost thou amuse thyself in this fine house, Pedrillo? Must not we think of setting off soon?"

"Setting off?" exclaimed Pedrillo, skipping back like a frighted squirrel, and looking at his master with an arch leer; "pox take it! let us first become

* "For the Babylonians had an idol called Bel, and there was spent upon him every day, twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and six vessels of wine; yet was it but clay within, and brass without, neither did it eat nor drink any thing."—History of Bel, in *Apocrypha*, v. 3, 7.



as well as we can, before we think of going. Why, signior, there's no such mighty hurry; people don't meet with such lodgings as these upon every high-road; and as to the fairies, if you please not to take it ill of me, signior, let them say what they like about it. I am of the fancy, look ye, that it is always much better to live among Christian people, than in the midst of that tribe of enchanters, hobgoblins, and spirits, where one never knows who and who's together. The fair Laura made a conquest of me from the first moment I saw her, though, by the way, I took her for a sylphid; but now that we know her to be Mrs. Laura, made of flesh and blood like the rest of us honest folk, and that she is a good Christian, and that she is neither a sylphid nor a gnomide, but on the contrary, that she is Mrs Laura, waiting-woman to our very gracious lady Donna Felicia de Cardena, I love her ten times more and more for it. In short, Signior Don Sylvio, I hope you were only laughing when you talked about leaving this charming seat, where I am sure we are so well off, that I cannot think what people could wish for more. Though the house itself is neither built of sapphires nor diamonds, yet still, as Laura tells me, it is one of the finest in the whole province; and were I you, sir, I do think, I should never wish for a better as long as I lived. I know very well what I know, though I don't blow a trumpet, and tell everybody. But sometimes people find more than they looked for; I am sure a lark is quite a kite at any time, and who minds losing a gudgeon to catch a salmon? For my own part, I shan't say a word: but look ye here, signior, we shall not budge out of this house without setting two or three weddings upon the church steeple first and foremost. I only beg of you, signior, to remember this in proper time and place, and that 'twas I that told you so beforehand."

"I should be glad to know," said Don Sylvio, "what kind of secret thou hast got in thy stomach, which

so pesters thee; for I perceive that thou canst hardly wait the moment of discharging thyself of it."

"So then, you take me for a blab, I suppose?" replied Pedrillo. "Upon my word, though, you deserve to find me as stiff and obstinate in my turn as the dumb man that would not answer a syllable. You may think I can't keep a secret, just as you please. But no, no! I have my own reasons, and I fancy Laura has hers too, or she would not have so strictly charged me to say nothing to you about the princess's—— Pox take it! I had like to have blown the whole mystery; but, however, I caught myself up in good time. Well! only have a little patience, signior, when the pears are ripe they fall of themselves: we shall soon see extraordinary things come about. But it must be owned, signior, you are born under a lucky star. Huzza! long live the fairies and enchanted butterflies; for certainly, had we never been such fools as to run hunting after the blue butterfly—— But I say no more! I know what I know, and that's enough; and what is more, signior, you see how I *can* hold my tongue, and I can keep secrets. Were I a prating fellow, as your worship is so often pleased to throw in my teeth, how should I have been so silent after finding both picture and princess and all together?"

"Ha! what saidst thou?" hastily cried Don Sylvio; "hast found my princess's portrait? Where is it—or what hast thou done with it?"

"Oh ho! I beg your pardon, signior," replied Pedrillo, with all the calmness in the world. "I have no portrait, believe me; no, nor did I say I had found your princess's picture; for in truth, I must have told a grievous lie if I *had* said——"

"Fool! what art thou chattering then about finding a portrait and a princess?" demanded Don Sylvio.

"Signior," said Pedrillo, "you did not take me



right. I did not say so, really now: for look ye, that is exactly the whole mystery of the matter; and, having once promised to say nothing about it, though you were to promise me mountains and wonders, not a syllable of it shall jump out of my lips. I beg and beseech you, signior, ask me no questions. The devil is full of his tricks; and if I were not to take great care, some little word or other might slip me unawares. In short, Signior Don Sylvio, I shall say no more than this; and that is, that if we had known what I know at this moment, the fairy Rademante might have saved you the trouble of pursuing the blue butterfly over hill and dale, as well as those knocks with the club-stick that we received for its sake; and might just as well have left us at home—— But no, what a fool am I! for then we should never have met the princess; though, by the bye, she is no other than—ay, true! yes, 'tis so. Well, let them say what they will. But softly; o' my conscience, the whole mystery was just going to burst from my lips."

"Why, what the devil is come to thee, stupid beast?" cried Don Sylvio, half mad with impatience. "Rascal! mind me; either speak so as one may comprehend thee, or hold thy babbling tongue."

"Why, then, call me an ass, signior, if I comprehend anything more of it than yourself, though I say it," answered Pedrillo. "If we consider the matter one way, one should suppose the fairy has been laughing at you: and yet, certain it is, she has kept her word with you. The picture is found again, that is very sure; and the princess too, though to speak strictly, she is neither a blue butterfly, nor as if one should say, a princess? The devil himself I think could not cleverly make out this affair, that has neither head nor tail to it; and yet, to be sure, a person must be something or other; and if the picture—But really now, I don't know

myself what I would say. My head quite turns round with thinking about our adventures. Nobody shall ever beat it out of my brains, but there must be such things as fairies and fairy doings; for i' faith, it is a very clear case, that all this could never have come about so queerly, and all by mere chance.—But, if I am not mistaken—ay, there comes the princess herself—Donna Felicia, I would say. I' fackins! she drops in just at the nick of time. One minute later, and my whole secret would have blown up, unless I could have ceased talking."

At these words he withdrew to a distance from Don Sylvio, who, the moment his fair one appeared, instantly forgot the curiosity with which the mysterious Pedrillo had inspired him. Accordingly, advancing with long steps, he struck into another walk of the labyrinth, where soon he hoped to meet with the object of his warmest wishes.



CHAPTER II

IN WHICH THE PLOT BEGINS TO UNRAVEL

WHEN two lovers avoid each other, the one does it commonly to be sought for with more eagerness, and found with more ease by the other. Donna Felicia no sooner perceived our hero, than he took a path directly contrary to that where he was, but not without turning her head round more than once as she went. The moment she saw he was in search of her, she stole insensibly into an alley where he was sure of meeting her. Both seemed astonished at finding each other in the garden at so early an hour, but Donna Felicia was not quite so sincere as Don Sylvio to acknowledge the true reason. She pretended the fineness of the morning, whereas Don Sylvio ingenuously confessed he was come into the garden to enjoy his reflections more coolly and more to his mind. A very significant look which he glanced at Donna Felicia at the same time, and a sigh that stole from him unawares, supplied everything that might seem obscure in his discourse, and stamped its genuine value. Donna Felicia, however, who clearly understood their meaning, seemed not to have observed them; but, turning the conversation to the fairies, asked him, whether the last night's history had not seemed to him like a dream.

"For my own part," continued she, "I must confess to you, I have been all night long travelling in the whale's belly; and if you have any curiosity to know more, I could perhaps give you some news that may not be indifferent to you."

Upon this, with all the gravity of a lover of seventeen, Don Sylvio replied, that for his part, as he had thought of nothing but her, waking, since he first beheld her, it was impossible for his soul to employ itself on any other object in his dreams. At the same time he owned, that from what had passed within him ever since he had the honour of becoming acquainted with her, he was almost persuaded there could be no other enchantment in the world than love. "Ah! why is it," he cried, "that I cannot find words to paint to you my situation? You have given me a new existence. Your presence diffuses a brightness round me, that embellishes all nature, and renders it more affectingly beautiful in my eyes. I fancy myself in another world. Everything I see seems but as a reverberation of your charms; things the most inanimate, appear animated, and breathe as it were only love. Even in your absence, at every place where I before have seen you, you leave the traces of some magic charm; and, though invisible, methinks I feel you constantly and always present."

"Don Sylvio!" interrupted Donna Felicia, giving him a tender look, which she strove to conceal under an airy smile, "do not oblige me to tell you that you are as well versed in the poets as the Prince——"

"Oh, name him not, Donna Felicia," cried our hero, whom her words, very innocently as they were uttered, had so moved that the tears stood in his eyes; "do not hurt the sincerity of my soul by a comparison which I so little deserve. I tell you what I feel, and would I could tell it you in such a language as might better express my real sentiments than all languages in the world. What I have felt since I saw you, differs infinitely from the effects of a heated imagination. Your first look extinguished all that fire. I remember my past life but as a vain airy dream; 'twas from that fortunate moment alone in which I first beheld you, that I can



reckon myself to have truly existed. And oh, how—how——"

Here our young, too-timid hero stopped short, explaining the residue of what he had not courage to pronounce, by a look that pierced the beautiful Felicia to the inmost soul.

"Perhaps," replied she, "I might accuse you with too much reason of not being so sincere towards me as you would wish me to believe. But I will not reproach you, nor have I any authority to do so. You have done me the honour, Don Sylvio, to take me for a fairy; and now permit me to prove to you, that at least, in one respect, I resemble your Radiante. Observe here, this is the portrait of your mistress which you lost; I restore it to you just as you received if from her hands."

So saying, she gave him the picture, inwardly diverting himself at the perplexity into which so unexpected a present threw him. He accepted it with a trembling hand, contemplated it for some time, then steadfastly looked at Donna Felicia, and again returned to the portrait. At length he cried—

"Wheresoever this portrait comes from, or whoever it is intended to represent, my eyes, madam, tell me that it is yours; and my heart avouches, that all the power this picture has usurped over me, absolutely proceeds, beautiful Felicia, from the wonderful resemblance it bears to you. I did not receive it from a fairy's hands, as you mentioned just now: I found it in the wood adjoining to the park at Rosalva. This circumstance, added to that of its having been seized from me, and now restored to you, seems to imply something mysterious. Do explain it to me, fair Felicia. Certainly it is your own portrait; the moment I saw it, it took an entire possession of my soul. I perceived it by that inexpressible love wherewith it inspired me. I saw it must resemble her who alone was capable of rendering me happy: my heart avowed in those lively

colours the object of all its wishes. But oh, how infinitely more exquisite was that sensation when I beheld the original!"

"Take care," said Donna Felicia, smiling; "your heart had like to have played you a little shrewd turn; for I assure you, this portrait is not mine, notwithstanding the resemblance which you think you find in it."

During their conversation they had pursued their walk, and now, just as Donna Felicia uttered the last words, they came up to the pavilion. She perceived the embarrassment into which her explanation had put Don Sylvio, though he inwardly persisted, that in loving that portrait, he had never loved any but her, let it represent whom it would. He attributed it to the effect of a secret presentiment, or foresight, though he could not help owning that the circumstance in which he had received the picture back seemed a riddle to him. Donna Felicia could not be so cruel as to leave him long in a state of perplexity, which, at best, could only serve to gratify her vanity. She therefore led him through the hall of the pavilion into a cabinet; on entering which he immediately perceived two portraits of the natural size, placed on the opposite sides of the room, and which so perfectly resembled each other, that there was no distinguishing between them any otherwise than by a slight difference in the colouring, which none but an able connoisseur could have observed.

"Now one of these portraits," said she, "is mine; guess, Don Sylvio, which of the two it is."

"Both are yours," cried our hero; "for the one seems evidently a copy of the other."

"Ho, Don Sylvio, you are mistaken," replied Felicia. "That yonder, which you take for mine, is at least sixty years older than this other; for it represents my grandmother, Donna Dorothea de Jutella, just as she was at sixteen years of age: and here," continued she, pointing to a little miniature



portrait which hung below the large one, "here you see another picture of her, which was done nearly about the same time. It perfectly resembles the large one, and from this was taken that very copy which gave birth to the singular intrigue we have been speaking of. Upon finding so strong a likeness between Donna Dorothea and myself, my father was induced to have my picture taken in my sixteenth year, in the same dress and attitude as hers; and everybody that saw this portrait declared it equally resembled my grandmother and myself. My grandfather, who was extremely fond of his lady, got the little portrait painted which fell into your hands, and wore it about him, as was the custom of that time, fastened to a golden chain. He left it to my mother; from her it at length came to me, and I fixed to it that string of pearls, and constantly wore it as a collar, till the day I lost it in that very forest where you must have found it soon after. Thus you have the whole history of this matter: and now," added she, smiling, "since both have an equal claim upon your inclinations, 'tis with you to decide in favour either of the grandmother, or of her granddaughter."

Don Sylvio was quite beside himself on hearing a deduction and elucidation of particulars so exactly conformable to the wishes of his heart. He threw himself at Donna Felicia's feet, and told her, in that pathetic disorder of spirits which constitutes the true eloquence of love, such things as might seem no less insipid to our readers than they were naturally pleasing to Donna Felicia, who was sensibly affected by them. In the situation wherein she found her own heart, she took such pleasure in listening to a lover like Don Sylvio, that a considerable time elapsed before she once thought of restraining the young gentleman's enthusiasm. At length she desired him to rise and follow her into the saloon, where they might more commodiously pursue their conversation.

There Don Sylvio ingenuously related to her all his fairy tale, the history of the butterfly, and the apparition of the fairy Radiante. He acknowledged that this supposed vision was partly owing to the having his imagination filled with marvellous anecdotes of the fairy generation; and the more willingly did he make this confession, because Donna Felicia allowed him uninterruptedly so to do; not without feeling a singular pleasure in placing the other part of this very particular phenomenon to the account of some secret divination, or kind of prescience of the soul, which anticipated, as it were, that he should soon behold the original of this darling copy. "Though the fairies," continued he, "are but imaginary beings, I shall ever consider them as my best benefactresses, since but for them I might have languished out my days in solitude at Rosalva; and, perhaps, might forever have missed the happiness of finding her, whom my heart, full of those desires which it has ever since felt, seemed so ardently to think of and pursue."

He went on painting his sentiments to the beautiful Felicia for a good while, with the perfect enthusiasm of a lover truly smitten. The young lady herself became imperceptibly affected to such a degree, that, forgetting all her former resolutions, she could not help relating to him how she had found him sleeping under the rose-bushes, and that from the moment she saw him, it had been out of her power to be uninterested in favour of the unknown sleeper; and still more so now, as the sentiments with which she had evidently seemed to inspire him, must render him dearer to her. This animating confession threw our hero into so perfect an ecstasy, that all he could do was again to cast himself at his fair one's feet, and kiss her hands a thousand and a thousand times over, till sight and breath almost forsook him together. There cannot perhaps be anything more dangerous for a fair lady of Donna Felicia's age, than



a view of that felicity with which her first favours inebriate her lover, and whenever that lover is young, handsome, well made, and has as much natural vivacity as Don Sylvio, I should apprehend the danger to be not much less on his side.

On this account we hope the amiable Felicia will stand excused, for having, perhaps, shown her enraptured adorer too much indulgence. Under that soft intoxication of soul in which she appears, dissolving as it were in love and its delights, and where the liveliest expression of those sentiments appears all too feeble, we cannot in justice expect her to have the power of preserving that equanimity which the wisdom of moral philosophers is so fond to prescribe. These sublime geniuses demand, and indeed with reason, that we should never go too far. But the point is to know what may or may not be too far, in cases like those we speak of; and by what means, hitherto unknown, it is possible to make love and wisdom walk straight forward in parallel lines, so that the one may never stray from the other.

To an amorous young couple like Don Sylvio and the beautiful Felicia, time is not a series of moments, but one continual immovable moment, that would insensibly swallow up whole years, were it not drawn out of this enchanting ecstasy by external causes, or a dissipation of the animal spirits. The parties in question so little found themselves under the latter predicament, that they were equally surprised to learn from Laura that breakfast waited for them. In consequence of this information, it was thought proper for Don Sylvio to withdraw a few minutes; minutes, which, however, appeared not a little tedious, for during four hours successively last past, he had found himself so little tired with looking at his dear Felicia, that it seemed almost impossible to detach himself from her for a single moment.

Presently, after the whole little society assembled in Donna Felicia's apartment to drink tea, Don

Eugenio and Don Gabriel were greatly astonished at the visible metamorphosis which had taken place in our hero. The latter had got himself ready armed with a variety of arguments, in order to force the fairies to their last entrenchments in Don Sylvio's brain. But he soon perceived the whole business done without him, and found himself obliged to allow that two fine eyes know better how to persuade, and can work a more sudden conversion in a few minutes, than the Academy, the Lyceum, or the Stoa * might, with all their united forces, have been able to do in the course of as many years.

* The famous schools in which Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno taught the Athenians philosophy.



CHAPTER III

NEW DISCOVERIES

BREAKFAST being over, the company retired into Don Eugenio's library, where Don Gabriel employed himself in showing his young friend and the ladies various experiments in natural philosophy; when, all on a sudden, a noise like that of some kind of carriage was heard in the courtyard before the house, which presently interrupted the attention of his disciples. Let any one imagine the agreeable confusion of Don Sylvio, when, a minute or two after, he beheld his dear aunt, Donna Menzia, enter the room.

In order to save any future critic, who may possibly be inclined to give himself the trouble of defending this work against the biting tooth of a Zoilus, or any of his brethren—that is to say, against all and every one who, to the very great mortification of our just paternal love for this procreation of our intellects, should maliciously dare to attempt to wish or to discover its faults and imperfections,—to save, I say, this excellent and learned personage (to whom, thus publicly and beforehand we pay our best thanks for the labours he shall undertake, for he will find enough to do) the pains of defending us from the reproach of having, against all probability, brought the sage and venerable Donna Menzia, *quasi Deum ex machinâ*, to the feast of Don Eugenio, riding in a calash drawn by two poor worn-out tits, without assigning any other good reason for so doing but truly because we have occasion for her. For these reasons we think it incumbent upon us first and

foremost to observe that this unlooked-for apparition did not happen by our means, but through the care and discretion of that famous barber, or barber-surgeon, or surgeon-barber, who hath already more than once in the course of this performance, appeared and figured upon the stage. This gentleman, in a tour he had made the evening or two before to Lirias to dress the wounded person, had heard of Don Sylvio's arrival, and through the imprudent loquacity of the discreet Pedrillo, had picked up certain other little particulars, which made him suspect there was some mystery in the matter. Fraught with this intelligence, Master Blas immediately hied him away to Rosalva, where every method had already been used to discover our hero in all the adjacent places. Donna Menzia was very greatly alarmed at these tidings; for as her nephew's marriage with the beautiful Mergelina was one of the conditions without which her own nuptials with Signior Rodrigo Sanchez could not absolutely take place, it was impossible for her to be unconcerned at the news which Master Blas, with a very mysterious air, poured into her ear in a whisper; and which, if they meant anything, imported that to judge from appearances, Don Sylvio was not at Lirias for nothing. In a word, she thought the affair sufficiently important to demand her personal attendance to bring him back to Rosalva. She accordingly arrived in these dispositions, which, joined to the profound contempt with which the high antiquity of her house inspired her for the nobility of a fresh date, gave her on her arrival at Lirias one of those gracious casts of feature which it is easier to imagine than describe. And, moreover, to complete her misfortunes, seeing her nephew in such dangerous company as that of Donna Felicia and Jacintha—dangerous to the last degree, according to her principles—her ill-humour rose to such a pitch, that her countenance, which, without these additional charms, was better



calculated to express the severity of virtue than its graces, took the air of a fury so perfectly that her meagre form wanted nothing more than a few serpents hung round her head, and a torch in her hand, to represent one of the graces of the infernal regions. However, notwithstanding all these charms, as being Don Sylvio's aunt, she was received in a manner so respectful and so engaging as to find herself obliged a little to unwrinkle her terrible and menacing brow. The beauty and noble mien of Don Eugenio likewise contributed their part to reclaim her; and these succeeded so well, that the two ladies, who, upon the first look with which she honoured them, had retired to the farther end of the room, at length resumed courage to advance towards the sofa, where Donna Menzia had seated herself at Don Eugenio's request. They did it, however, with such precaution, as to place themselves near enough the door to get clear off in case of accidents. Donna Menzia, after a short preamble, explained the reason of her coming; expressing no small astonishment at what could possibly have occasioned her nephew's being at Lirias. Don Eugenio informed her it was entirely owing to chance, and put it to the account of certain adventures which had happened to himself; mentioning the valiant assistance Don Sylvio had afforded him, without which he should have run a great risk of being overpowered. But he took care to suppress a few circumstances relative to the history in question. Donna Menzia expressed so much satisfaction at her nephew's good conduct, as it rendered him not unworthy the noble blood which flowed in his veins, that the amiable Jacintha could not help venturing a few words likewise in praise of our young hero's prowess.

'Twas then for the first time that Donna Menzia condescended so far as to cast a disdainful look upon these little female beings. We have already observed somewhere, that Jacintha was neither tall,

nor had she that exact symmetry of feature or exquisite delicacy of complexion which we expect in a consummately fine woman. 'Twas that certain inexpressible charm which discovers itself sometimes in the physiognomy, and diffuses itself over the whole form, and that alone, which rendered her unaccountably engaging at the first sight. This it was which made her find favour in the eyes of Donna Menzia, who was perfectly well satisfied with her own charms, and what she herself imagined to be a majestic shape and size. Nay, by little and little, she even went so far as to honour the young creature with some degree of her attention; when, just as she was about telling Jacintha that she had never seen any person in her life that so much put her in mind of her deceased sister-in-law, Donna Isidora, as she did—in stepped Don Sylvio, after no small hesitation to appear before her, attended by Don Gabriel.

The panegyrics which had already been bestowed upon him, the politeness of address with which he saluted his aunt, and, perhaps also the figure of the gentleman who accompanied him — one of those lucky figures calculated to conciliate esteem the moment they appear — these, altogether, had so good an effect, that Don Sylvio met with a much more gracious reception than he had dared to hope for. Don Gabriel, it seems, had been a good while acquainted with the old lady's character; accordingly, he was mischievous enough to tell her some of the finest things in the world, in the court style used at the time of Charles, the second of that name in Spain: so that presently, to the great diversion of the company, he saw himself honoured with the laughable character of a declared adorer and favourite of this dowager beauty. Every one exerted himself and herself to entertain the lady in the very best manner, heaping eulogiums and compliments upon her in the bombast style and taste of Amadis de Gaul.



The gentlemen had eyes only for her ladyship; and the young ladies affected so timid and so infantine a look in her presence, that she could not help verily fancying herself at least twenty years younger. In short, she became by degrees so gay, so facetious, and so cheery, that—it was really a pity!

This comedy went on for some time. The repeated observation which Donna Menzia had made upon the resemblance betwixt Jacintha and Donna Isidora de Rosalva, had led her into a very circumstantial detail of the adventures of her own youth, with which she tired the audience for about half an hour; when instantly loud shouts were heard, the noise of which seemed to come from the staircase. Pedrillo's voice soon distinguished itself, and the next moment he appeared in person, or rather, tumbled himself head and shoulders into the room, without any regard to his master or the rest of the company, crying out with all his might—

"Huzzah! joy to great Cæsar! There, signior, Pimpimp is found again; we have got little Pimpimp again! Ah, i' faith, I knew the cursed old Carabossa at fifty paces distance. But truly, she would not give him up, not she. So she vowed and protested she did not steal him away; and then she did set upon me, and did so clapper-claw and abuse me with her billingsgate language, that for the life of me I would not dare to repeat it before such good company. But upon my soul, she did not throw away her civilities into the Dead Sea: I gave her flash for flash, and combed her head for her a little in her own way. Oh, what an old carrion it is! and then, look ye, she had not stole him, forsooth! No, nor positively she would not give him into anybody else's hands but your own, signior; ay, and Don Eugenio she would speak to, in spite of us all, that she would, though the devil himself stood over her with a horse-whip. So I told her as how there was company; 'and,' said I, 'there's time enough to hear thee tell fortunes some

time else: and all that we wanted to know is known already,' said I; 'and so,' said I, 'thou hast nothing more to do than give us little Pimpimp, and then, prithee, madam, troop off as soon as thou wilt, or, by Saint Jago! I shall pay thee back a hundredfold all the buffets, cuffs, and kicks of the breech, and so forth, that I received the day before yesterday by thy contrivance, or that of thy brimstone companion's,' said I, 'old Fanfreluche!' But all this, however, would have been talking to no purpose—in she would come in spite of my teeth, had not I, at last, e'en took hold of her by main force and pushed her downstairs."

"Well, but what art thou talking about, my friend?" demanded Don Eugenio. "Who is this old woman? Did not she tell thee what she wanted?"

"Signior," replied Pedrillo, "she herself can best tell you who she is. My master there, Signior Don Sylvio, did insist upon it against wind and tide, that she is the fairy Carabossa. But if I must speak my mind, I think, saving your honour's presence, she is only an old gipsy——"

No sooner had Don Eugenio caught the sound of these last words, than he rose precipitately from his seat, and went out with all possible expedition. "Perchance," thought he, "this may be the very gipsy I am in search of?" And happily for him, for this once his hopes were not deceived.

The supposed Carabossa, whom our hero had met with in the woods the morning after his flight from Rosalva, was no other than that very gipsy, who, as we have before observed, acted so principal a part in Jacintha's history. The reader possibly may recollect that the indiscreet curiosity of the corregidor at Seville had obliged this worthy matron to retire from that capital. Unluckily for her, her name, person, and merit were so celebrated through all the provinces of Spain, that she knew not which side to turn herself to keep from falling into those very toils which



she wished to avoid. In this dilemma she thought of Jacintha, who, as she had learned from one of her old acquaintance, was acting with universal applause upon the stage in Granada. She accordingly bent her course thither as much disguised as possible, and arrived at Granada the same day that Jacintha had left it. She gained full intelligence of everything concerning her from an actress, who failed not to enlarge upon what people heard and imagined with regard to Don Eugenio's inclinations and views respecting Jacintha. This information presently suggested to her a means of procuring herself a protector in the person of the young gentleman, who might amply reward her, by affording her a secure retreat within his own territories, for the service she could render him. Upon this she used the utmost diligence to get to Valencia before Jacintha, and it was just at this juncture that she had met with our adventuress upon the road, in her way through the wood. A few leagues from Xelva, by a like chance, she met with one of Don Eugenio's stewards at the inn where she passed the night, who was come from an estate of his lord's in the neighbourhood of Valencia, and intended going next day to Lirias. This man informed her that if she wanted to speak with his master, she had only to go back the way she came; and as she pretended to have things of the utmost consequence to communicate to him, the steward had politeness enough to accompany her. They accordingly reached Lirias just at the nick of time when the truth of the discovery she wanted to make might be put past doubt by the presence of Donna Menzia.

A minute or two after Don Eugenio's quitting the saloon, he returned, leading in the old gipsy by the hand.

"Donna Menzia," said he, "I bring you here a woman who boasts of being able to restore to you a lost niece."

The amiable Jacintha, the instant she perceived her foster-mother, shrieked out in the greatest consternation and terror; while the old woman, immediately on seeing Donna Menzia, threw herself at her feet, and begged pardon of her for a crime, of which she confessed herself guilty towards her. This done, she gave her a very circumstantial account of the place and time in which she had artfully carried off her niece, Donna Seraphina, then about five years of age; adding, that that young lady, pointing to Jacintha, was the same Seraphina, whom she was rejoiced thus to find again; and as a certain proof that what she said was true, she produced a little chain of gold with a crucifix, which Seraphina wore as a necklace at the time of her being carried off.

It would be easier to imagine than describe the agreeable surprise which so fortunate a discovery must occasion in our little society. Don Eugenio, who could not contain himself for joy, would readily have excused the gipsy from urging any other proof whatever: but Donna Menzia was not quite so open to conviction, or so easy to be persuaded. She examined the old gipsy with the utmost strictness respecting the minutest circumstances of this female rape; and at length, perfectly satisfied with the old woman's answers, she began to consider attentively the gold necklace, which she recollected to be the very same that she had given her little niece when Don Pedro, the father, committed his children to her care. In a word, after an examination and scrutiny that lasted near an hour, Jacintha was acknowledged as Donna Seraphina de Rosalva, and cordially embraced in that character by the whole company, particularly by our hero and his aunt. This unlooked-for discovery diffused inexpressible joy through the whole house; and Don Eugenio, who wished to diffuse his own happy feelings through all nature, gave immediate orders for celebrating the day with every expression of festivity.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION OF THIS HISTORY

At length we have conducted the history of our hero to a period at which it ceases to be marvellous, or, what amounts to the same thing, at which it begins to take the common turn of all human events; ceasing, of course, to be adapted to the views which we proposed to ourselves in the composition of this work. Don Sylvio, who from this hour acknowledges no other fairy than his adorable Felicia, and no other enchantment than that which darts from her fine eyes, is upon the point of being happy, worthy of his happiness, and if, as we hope, he shall live long enough, even of becoming wise in due time. In his present agreeable situation, therefore, we might now leave him to his love and the care of his propitious stars, had we not in all probability some readers too indolent to imagine for themselves the natural issue and result of this wonderful story; though certainly nothing can be more easily guessed out, without any need of our interposition. Hereby then we inform all such readers, that Don Sylvio, the same day, gave his aunt a full account of Don Eugenio's proceeding, and how highly worthy he had evinced himself of this newly-found sister. He then acquainted her with their mutual inclination for each other, as well as with the singular commencement and successful progress of his own passion for the beautiful Felicia de Cardena. Don Sylvio met with little difficulty in obtaining the old lady's consent to this twofold alliance, proposed to her by

Don Eugenio and her nephew. She now blushed to think that a hundred thousand ducats should have rendered her capable of deeming a pettifogging attorney of Xelva, and his monster of a niece, worthy to be allied with her family; not to say, that being somewhat of a calculator, she was clearly of opinion that with a fortune of forty thousand ducats per annum, which Donna Felicia would bring her dear Don Sylvio on their marriage, the ancient splendour of her house was likely to be much better re-established. One of the marriage articles on her nephew's part, by which he assigned her an annual pension of six thousand ducats for life, did not a little further contribute to convince her ladyship of the propriety of the connection. So snug an income sufficiently enabled her to make shift without Signior Rodrigo Sanchez; and let matters turn out how they would, she could easily make herself amends for the loss of him by the help of so comfortable a pittance.

Though there are very good reasons to believe that our hero was now entirely recovered of any pernicious effects which the fairies had produced in his brain, it was nevertheless judged proper to fill up with realities that vacuum which the banishment of the fairies had left there. It was accordingly settled that he should make the tour of Europe, the better to render himself worthy the possession of his fair Felicia. Don Eugenio very affectionately and cheerfully determined to accompany him. Don Gabriel carried his friendship so far as to insist on serving him as the mentor of his travels; and our fair ones were generous enough to give their assent to so eligible an expedition, though likely to be attended with a separation of two whole years. In the meantime, the ladies concluded to retire to a convent in Valencia, and there wait for the return of their admirers — a period not a little enlivened by the frequent letters which they regularly received from them. The two years being elapsed, Don



Eugenio and Don Gabriel brought back their young friend so accomplished, that it was scarce possible for any but Donna Felicia to recollect him. She, however, was by no means surprised to see that an intercourse with the great world, and the various opportunities it offers of informing and cultivating the mind, should thus have developed those happy dispositions which she knew he possessed; and which from their first acquaintance had rendered him so amiable and estimable in her eyes.

At length, this lovely young widow and her worthy friend, Donna Seraphina, whom the conversation of Donna Felicia, and others of similar rank and merit, had rendered one of the most amiable creatures living, consented with pleasure to make their ardent lovers happy. Honest Pedrillo —who had accompanied his master and returned as alert and as talkative, but much more polished and genteel than heretofore—in reward of the sufferings he had formerly endured in the toilsome perilous pursuit of the blue butterfly, and as a return for the services he had rendered his master during their late tour; honest, faithful Pedrillo obtained the fair, prudent Laura; together with the post of steward of the household, of which, very probably, he remains possessed to the present hour, in the most amiable and the happiest family throughout Spain.

THE END

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